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MANITOU

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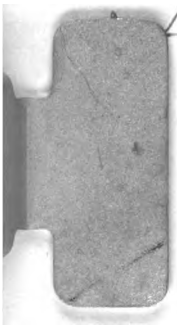

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MANITOU.

BY

MARGRET HOLMES. Bates

"To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware."

—*Bryant.*

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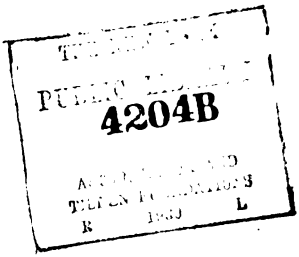

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TO ALL HOOSIERS
WHO LOVE THEIR NATIVE STATE
AND WISH TO KNOW AND
PRESERVE THE ROMANCES CONNECTED WITH
THEIR WHITE VILLAGES AND
GREEN AND GOLDEN FARMS, ARE
THESE PAGES
DEDICATED.

M. H.

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MANITOU.

CHAPTER I.

IN A STRANGE LAND.

"ROCH-ES-TER!" shouted the brakeman as the 9:30 P. M. train steamed into a village of Northern Indiana. There was not much bustle, very little confusion, very few passengers getting off or on the train. Two or three omnibuses were in waiting, each with its driver and one other attendant (call him a footman), who walked about, calling in an automatic way: "Right this way, ladies and gentlemen! free 'bus to the 'Travelers' Rest;' all aboard for the 'Central House;' this way, sir; come right along, madam—have 'bus to 'North End Hotel!'" The few travelers who expected to remain here were, for the most, residents of the village, who, returning from a trip of business or pleasure to some neighboring town, now quietly picked up their valises and trudged homeward.

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Two or three brisk commercial men with their sample cases, "at home" air, and jovial greetings, and four undoubted strangers, made up the number craving the hospitalities of Rochester for the night. The four last mentioned were evidently traveled persons, and the gentleman of the party, as the little crowd dispersed and the train sped away in the distance, stood still on the platform receiving the united attentions of the several hotel "runners." While they vociferated, he quietly looked at each one, and then slightly raising his hand, he asked:

"Which man is from the Central House?"

"I am," said one of them, squaring himself and raising the lantern he carried so as to show his own face and that of the stranger.

"Come with me, then; I have some light luggage that the ladies will require to-night; the rest may be sent for in the morning."

"Oh," said the man, following him; "you're the party what telegraphed last week for rooms, are you?"

"I certainly telegraphed to the 'Central' for rooms," the traveler answered shortly, "and I hope they're ready."

"You bet they are, and just the tip-top rooms in this town."

The stranger laughed pleasantly, showing white teeth and merry, dark eyes, as the two entered the

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ladies' waiting-room, where his three companions, evidently mother and daughters, sat amongst baskets and bags, drawing books, light literature and two or three faded bouquets. The flowers were being cared for by the youngest of the party, a girl of fourteen or fifteen. She insisted they must not be thrown away. She was busy with the faded, drooping things when the gentleman came in with the omnibus man, and was saying: "Now, mamma, and Lura, don't look so reproachful, and don't think it's very foolish. I shall take care of these all myself—shan't bother cousin Eugene. See how compact they are, and you don't know how beautifully they'll freshen during the night. I'll get a vase at the hotel—"

"There'll be a black bug in the bottom of it," interrupted cousin Eugene; then to the man, "Take these baskets and parcels." He drew the elder lady's hand within his arm, marshaled the two girls before them, and after a few stumbles in their endeavors to follow their portable property over the strange and poorly lighted platform, they reached the vehicle in waiting and were soon on their way, the heavy omnibus rolling almost noiselessly through the powdered sand toward the Central House and those tip-top rooms. Eugene inwardly hoped they were not to be quartered in a garret.

"Eugene," said the elder lady, "I don't know

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what manner of place you've brought us to, nor why you should stop at all south of our destination."

"Don't you remember, Aunt Marie, I told you we should bring our entertainment with us, to be supplemented, pieced out, as it were, by what we shall find here!"

"Oh, but cousin Eugene! our lunch baskets are empty," called out the younger girl, who answered to all manner of nicknames, but whom the mother, with her soft voice, oftenest called Adele; "we must find some horrid place with a placard, 'Entertainment for man and beast.' Which will you register yourself, cousin?" and the girl laughed saucily, leaning forward till her hands rested on the gentleman's knees.

"I shouldn't object to being Beast if you take the role of Beauty."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Adele. "Oh, you wicked creature! how you do always turn the points of my jokes against myself. How we *would* look making love! But after I should have all your teeth drawn out, you wouldn't be half so handsome, and 'I love not hollow cheek'"—

"Adele, Adele," chided the sister, a sweet, serious girl of nineteen or twenty years, "how you do run on! Be quiet, will you? and Eugene, tell me, now that we are going to alight, where we are."

"My dear Miss Ashleigh, my distant, though most

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honored cousin, we are in an omnibus, but are about to get out."

"Now, Eugene," answered Lura, "you are leading us around in the dark—"

"Like lambs to the slaughter-house, or the wolf playing grandmother," put in Adele.

"I don't know," Lura answered, "which one of you two is the greatest trial to my patience."

The travelers found their rooms to be clean and pleasant, and Eugene remarked as he was leaving them for the night:

"Now auntie, and cousins, you are too tired to-night to talk, but in the morning I'll bring a map, show you in what part of this great and glorious republic you are, and explain to you fully why you are here. This is a visit I've dreamed of for several years; but my happiest dreams never showed me such appropriate companions for my undertaking."

"Oh, Eugene!" and Adele tip-toed across the room and clasped the gentleman's arm, "do stay and tell us all about it to-night."

Mrs. Ashleigh and Lura looked expectant, and Lura said:

"If the story is not too long;" but a half suppressed yawn told that she was not very impatient for an explanation.

"But it's quite a long story, with an index and a

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supplement, and whole pages of foot notes," said Eugene, and, looking into the eager eyes raised to his face—"Firefly will enjoy the story much more outdoors, in the shade of some old trees and close by—What do you think?"

"Oh, Eugene, I don't know;" and the bright dark eyes flashed, the color deepened in the glowing cheeks, and Adele raised herself on her toes, while her hands unclasped, as if she were about to fly. They all laughed at her, and Eugene, taking the rosy face between his hands, exclaimed:

"You little enthusiast — how small a thing it takes to put you into raptures! But don't fly away."

"But what will we be beside?"

"Only a little lake."

"Oh, Eugene!" and away she went, pirouetting round the room in a way to have driven a ballet dancer wild with envy, and with steps to set a dancing master crazy.

Eugene bade them a merry good night, charging Adele to be up bright and early and be ready for their grand picnic.

"I shall not sleep a wink," she declared—but the way she kept her word was evident from the soft, regular breathing that came from the bed appropriated to her and her sister, and to which she had hurried with a half expressed notion that the morning would come sooner if she slept.

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Lura and her mother talked in a desultory way as they leisurely assisted each other in their preparations for the night; and, in their white sleeping garments, they were wonderfully alike. Lura said, as she glanced from the mirror to her mother's face:

"How much I resemble you, mamma, and at my age you must have looked just as I do."

Mrs. Ashleigh smiled as she patted her daughter's hand.

"I was older at your age than you are, for then you were a year old; and my life before that time, though not really a hard life, had been full of ways and plans to live and help those dependent on me. I had many privations and some real troubles."

"Poor little mamma!" and Lura kissed the hand she held; "but you had no trouble after you married till five years ago?"

"No, my dear; my life with your father was as nearly perfect happiness as I ever dare hope for either of my girls. I'm not unhappy now; I can not be with so much about me to love and care for, and you and Adele, dearest of all. Since we have known Eugene, I feel as if we all have in him a friend and protector. How well he understands Adele, and how fond she is of him!"

"Yes, mamma; but they are both so bright and full of life—so warm-hearted, impulsive and loving. How much both are like papa!"

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"Yes, very much, and I'm glad of it. Now, good-night, dear. I'm afraid we shall not be in spirit for the grand picnic to-morrow." The mother laid her hands on the bowed head of her daughter in silent blessing; then stepped softly to the bed where Adele lay with one round, rosy cheek pillowed in her hand, her lips parted, while her soft breathing was almost imperceptible. "My gypsy darling!" whispered the mother, lightly touching hand, cheek and hair with her lips, smiling as she did so. Everybody smiled on Adele. Strangers and little children in the streets, her school friends and teachers, every one with whom she came in contact, seemed to put forth their kindliest expression to respond to her own sunny, loving temper.

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CHAPTER II.

LANDMARKS FOR THE STRANGERS.

FOR a few hours after the arrival of the party from New Orleans, the register of the Central House was the most interesting literary work to be found in Rochester. Of course, as soon as the gentleman stranger laid down the pen, after filling the blank opposite the rooms reserved for him, the page was closely scanned by the clerk. Next in importance came the landlord, his wife, and two or three friends, who had peeped from behind doors and window-blinds to see the strangers from so far South. The feverish impatience of the chambermaid, waiter girls, cooks and stable boy could then be controlled no longer. They must see these names or they would "strike." A few loungers who made the hotel office a sort of club room, after the manner of village loungers, casually inspected the register; not that they cared to know, but it would be a piece of news for the woman in the peck measure, where the loungers ate and slept.

The nxet morning the landlord was surprised that

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he had never noticed before how very centrally the Central House was located, and how many of the residents of the town passed that way to business. And how interested his neighbors were in his well doing. Some asked plainly:

"Did your Southern friends come last night? Who are they, anyway?" or "Have the Butternuts arrived? Any relation to Jeff?" or "How about the rebel raiders?" etc.

Others, with more tact, but none the less determination, talked resumption, and pictured the effect it would have on times generally, hotel business particularly; asking in such an insinuating way:

"Now, Vincent, how many strangers, on an average, do you entertain weekly? Let's take a look at the register for the last week. This is June. The last month will furnish a very fair average for two or three months past, and as many to come. Now, suppose we have a solid money basis, with the readjustment that must naturally follow," and so on *ad infinitum*. The friendly speculation would end by an examination of the register, and Mr. Vincent was a little surprised to find the eagerness to strike an average was almost invariably merged into an intense interest in those last four names. Nothing in these to gratify the curiosity that reached southward and gasped to know the exact spot they started from, then

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stood dumbfounded and wondered what might be the destination of Mrs. Marie Ashleigh and daughters, Misses Lura and Adele, New Orleans, and Mr. Eugene Lagrange, Montreal, Canada. Happily unconscious of the little whirlwind they had started in the village, the tired travelers slept well, and were greeted next morning with a pleasant day and welcoming, cheerful smiles and kindly words from every person they met about the hotel. The general verdict seemed to be that the new-comers were aristocratic, and Mrs. Vincent, who had her own ideas of fine society, declared that this party was high-toned, and must be treated accordingly. "Not," said she, in confidence to the cook, "that they are dressed so grand; Phil. Clinton's wife will out-dress them every day in the week, and leave them 'way in the dust on Sunday, with her flounces and feathers and flummeries, but just the air there is about them. The mother—she's wearing light mourning, a widow, I guess, by the cap; and the girls are just too sweet and high-looking for any use. Here," she continued, without stopping to take breath, "let me see the coffee. I'm going in myself to see if everything's right in the dining-room. You're sure the coffee is clear and strong?"

"'Tis that," the cook answered; "look for yourself"—and she filled a cup.

"Yes, it's all right," and Mrs. Vincent smacked

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her lips after tasting, though the heat of the beverage brought tears to her eyes.

Then she bustled into the dining room in advance of a girl with a tray full of cups of the steaming coffee. She found her guests seated at table, Adele leading the conversation, and no less by her bright, saucy remarks than her brilliant beauty attracting all eyes. She had no sooner found Eugene than she commenced talking of the lake; but he declared he could say nothing, not even tell her the name of it until after breakfast. "Wait," he said, "till I am stayed with beefsteak and comforted with coffee—are you a Roman Catholic?"

"No, indeed! I am a disciple of Rousseau, and all nature-loving spirits;" and Adele flourished her hands toward the sunshine that sifted in through the wire screen of the window. "I have no religion that needs cathedrals and towers, and bells and masses, and tapers and altars, and priests and, oh, such oceans of money. But what has that to do with it?"

"Oh, nothing; I believe as you do, but you know papists have many ceremonials fasting; the Rousseauites, on the contrary, always cheer the inner man with substantials, and build up the frail tenement with the 'goods the gods provide' before holding communion with their high priest."

"Eugene, we have no priests."

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"No priests, but one priest or priestess."

And now both looked very serious and straight into each other's eyes, while Mrs. Ashleigh and Lura, half vexed at the sensation the two were creating, for every person in the room gave undisguised attention to what they were saying, wondered what would come next. Adele put her hand on the young man's shoulder and, leaning forward, asked in a low tone, as if frightened:

"Cousin Eugene, what priestess?"

Eugene laughed. "See, Aunt Marie, our chameleon is actually pale. There, dear," he continued, soothingly, though pinching her fingers at the same time, "I'll tell you what priestess—our mother, Nature. And here comes the coffee, some of Nature's own incense, poured from the censer of her confidential clerk, High Art. I know by the flavor."

"I'm sure I hope you'll find it to your taste," said Mrs. Vincent. "I went to the kitchen to see to it myself."

Eugene protested that she was sacrificing herself in a way to shame all coffee drinkers, yet, certainly, there was no hand and eye in the house like that of the mistress to insure gratifying results. Each one of the ladies had a word of praise for the coffee, and gentle kindliness for their hostess, and Mrs. Vincent made the rounds of the room beaming happily; dispensing smiles without stint upon her regular boarders, even

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on those who were hopelessly in arrears, and softening visibly to some transient guests who had been labeled on sight as some "no 'count folks, out on a first trip."

When breakfast was over Eugene Lagrange conducted his aunt and cousins to the hotel parlor, and, according to his promise, produced a map which showed where they were; the way by which they had come, and where they might go from this point.

"And here is where we are going to-day," pointing to an irregular little ring on the map. "This is the lake. It is a mile or two from town. We came past it last night; that is, near it, but not knowing just where it was, I failed to look out for it."

"Has it a name, cousin?" Lura asked.

"Yes, it is called"—he stopped suddenly, a smile twinkled in his eyes and twitched his moustache, as he looked from Lura to Adele, who, the very embodiment of expectation, was watching him.

"What ails Gypsy?" he asked, changing his tone and manner.

"Oh, please, cousin Eugene!" and Adele stole one arm about his neck, "tell us."

The three laughed, and Mrs. Ashleigh repeated: "Tell us! hear our advocate."

"Tell *me* then, Eugene, please—there's a dear, darling cousin!"

"Oh! oh! 'no more an' thou lovest me,' I'll tell

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you," said Eugene, holding the girl's hands; the name of the lake is Manitou."

"Manitou," repeated Adele, and "How very strange," murmured Mrs. Ashleigh and Lura.

"Gitche Manito, the Mighty," quoted Adele. "Oh, cousin!" she went on, with clasped hands and that enraptured look in her eyes, "is it true? are you in earnest? did Hiawatha *live here?*"

Eugene laughed. "What a catechism! All I've told you is true, and I'm very much in earnest; but Hiawatha didn't live here, at least I don't believe the oldest inhabitant knows anything of him. This little sheet of water we can drive around in an hour or two, and for reasons that shall be explained in it's own august presence, it has long borne the name of Manitou, or Master of Life."

"Oh, Eugene; isn't that glorious! How long is it since the Indians were here?"

"It is probably fifty years since any Indians lived here in their native way, but I believe there are some yet in Miami county, twenty or thirty miles from here, south, who are small farmers, and have become civilized enough to get drunk like white men. They live on what is called the 'Indian Reserve.' You see, Aunt Ashleigh, I know something of the country I've brought you to. I've given more study to the geography of this State, and latterly to this section of it,

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than I ever did to all the rest of the world. And now," he glanced at his watch, "there will be a carriage at the door for us in a few minutes; get ready, and you shall soon see Lake Manitou?"

"Why, Eugene, did you telegraph from home for the carriage, or when did you order it?" asked Lura.

"I ordered it this morning in the darkest hour. I was so anxious for a fine day, Adele, I didn't sleep any more than you did. I was up at half-past four o'clock; I saw the sun and an early hostler rise. I was in the kitchen and spoke for a basket of luncheon, and I think it will be plentiful and delicious. I smiled at the cook and made eyes at the dish-washer, and asked Mrs. Vincent if she had a daughter fortunate enough to resemble herself. If our luncheon is not all it should be, then never talk to me of any sublimity there may be in self-sacrifice. Now, hurry for the hats, here are our horses."

They were soon ready, and Eugene, receiving instructions from the hostler, from Mr. Vincent and several by-standers, all of whom talked to him and looked at the ladies, understood that he was to keep on Main street until he should pass the Court-house, then turn to the left and go straight ahead.

Away they went along the wide street, with its shaded sidewalks and prim business houses, and settled-for-life looking offices. Here and there were

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demure white cottages, with orthodox green blinds, and lilac trees, whose owners still clung affectionately to Main street, in spite of the pity accorded them by the more aristocratic dwellers on Jefferson, Pearl, and other secluded thoroughfares. "So public!" and "So noisy!" the patricians would sigh; though how the noise of an occasional carriage, buggy, or farm wagon, grinding softly through the powdered sand, could disturb one, even one possessed of nerves, it might have puzzled these possessors of secluded homes and blue blood to explain. The bright sunshine of a perfect June day, the waving trees, the green grass, the flowers that bloomed in the neat gardens, or rioted by the roadside like runaway children, the myriads of whirring insects, the birds, caroling for fullness of joy in existence, or chirping softly as they filled the yellow mouths of their unfledged young, all contributed to the happiness of bright, buoyant, nature-loving Adele Ashleigh. Her gypsy hat was pushed back till it rested on her shoulders, and she received the full glow of the sun on her face. Eugene watched her furtively, a smile that was caressing in its kindliness lighting up his eyes. Then the girl took off her gloves and held her small brown hands in the sun with a sigh of enjoyment. The mother remonstrated:

"Adele, dear, do put on your gloves, and shade your face with your hat; there's a good child," and she

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replaced the broad-brimmed hat, but it was met by two rebellious hands and a coaxing—

"Please mamma, just for this one little while; let me get a little browner—it won't be noticed at all when winter comes. Oh, this sunshine and soft air is delicious! but I'll promise, mamma, to be very careful after—well, I'll say this summer; and bye and bye I'll be as fair as Lura herself."

Mrs. Ashleigh could do nothing but leave her to have her way, as she always did, and she laughed pleasantly as she stroked the heavy raven braids of her young daughter, and glanced at the elder with her waxen complexion, wavy brown hair, and gentle eyes, "almost fawn color," Adele sometimes said.

"I think," said Eugene, "that Adele is more than a disciple of Rousseau; she comes nearer being a fire worshiper."

"No, cousin, I don't worship the sun, but when I'm out on a day like this, the heat and the light seem to go through and through me; I'm so—*alive!* I think—I feel as if I could almost fly; don't you?"

"Well, no," Eugene drawled, laughing, "I never have any such ethereal feeling as that, though I do enjoy out-door life in fair weather, probably as well as most people."

"I like out-doors when it rains and thunders and storms. Then it's grand. But it's all grand and

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great; the winds and the clouds and stars—to think of the stars! and the sun and the moon! Such common sights, yet so great and wonderful and far away. And there may be others that we can never see, never know anything about. How it rests me to think, and think, away out on the edge of the universe! and," she added, with a contemptuous little laugh, "May Peters, at school, said she understood astronomy perfectly; wouldn't give a fig for any one to tell her anything more about it; didn't believe there was anything more to be learned from the heavens than what had been set down in the books. Eugene, what we learn in books is so little, isn't it? Just what some other human creature found out. What sort of great, awful *Thing* is God, do you think? I can't think what sort of awful *Power* it is that created and controls such magnificent miracles."

Eugene looked into the serious eyes, and had no answer for her. In her merry moods, he would join and urge forward his young cousin into all manner of freaks, but when she drifted into a contemplative, poetic, worshipful vein, he could only be silent with wonder at the depth the young soul disclosed.

"She is so like her poor, dear father," Mrs. Ashleigh would say. "He would have lived out of doors the year round if he had dared."

They had left the village out of sight, and the

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road widened so that they could no longer touch the leaves of the young oak trees that grew close to the carriage-way and stood almost as compactly as a planted hedge. Here and there, through openings amongst the trees, could be seen glimpses of water; but Adele, looking off into the sky, busy with her own thoughts, did not notice till Lura asked:

"Cousin, is that Lake Manitou?"

"I think so," Eugene answered. "Yes, that's it."

"Gitche Manito, the Mighty," said Adele, softly, "what a pretty little lake it is!"

"I think we will find a nice, shady place, somewhere on the margin," said Engene, "pitch our tent, which we haven't got and don't need, have our picnic and explanation."

"I'm sure, Eugene," Mrs. Ashleigh answered, "it's a very pleasant place, and to stay here for a few days is not lost time, even if we have no entertainment but such as other tourists have. The hotel is clean and nice, the village is quiet and no doubt healthful, and this little sheet of water is simply enchanting."

"I am so glad you are pleased. I had many misgivings about bringing you to a place I knew nothing of myself, save by hearsay, but the temptation was too great to be withstood, at least by a fellow of my temperament, and I'm beginning to think the whole thing is going to be a tremendous success. But here

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is a good place to halt. The turf is smooth and unbroken, and we can follow the shade around these trees, while we hold our convention, and if I'm not much mistaken," and Mrs. Ashleigh thought he laughed nervously, "study family history."

There was no house near, excepting a low building of rough boards owned and occupied by the proprietor of quite a respectable number of boats, which he let to fishermen and picnic parties; but across the lake in all directions could be seen white farm houses, nestled amongst their gardens and orchards, and shimmering in the sunshine. Some half a dozen men stood about the board building, evidently fishers who had spent the night on the lake, as two or three of the boats were laden with fine fish. Besides the open boats, several gaily painted sail-boats with sonorous Latin names rocked lazily amongst the broad, shining leaves of water-plants. One of the group of men came up as the carriage stopped, and Eugene recognized the man from the stable who was to take the team home. "Will you want to come in before evening?" he asked.

"Oh, yes; I think so," said Eugene. "What do you say Auntie? It will be pleasanter here than at the hotel till two or three o'clock, won't it?"

"Yes, no doubt, if it won't rain, which there's no sign of now."

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"Then you *will* stay till evening," the man said, with a puzzled air.

"Oh, no; till about the middle of the afternoon; say two, half-past two, or three o'clock. Don't let it be later than three when you send for us."

"All right," said the man, and as he drove away over the short soft grass Eugene heard him tell the men at the boat house that he'd have to come after the party at two or three o'clock in the evening. The travelers had yet to learn that the dwellers in this section of Brother Jonathan's domain called all time after twelve o'clock, noon, evening.

One of the fishermen remarked, "Toney crowd, that," and the hostler answered with a leer and a flourish of his whip, "'Tis that."

Mrs. Ashleigh and her daughters arranged the traveling rugs and camp chairs and cushions, with which the carriage had been stowed, so as to be near each other and be comfortable as possible. The very last thing that Eugene removed from the carriage was a small hand valise, elaborately fashioned, and with fastenings of highly polished steel. This he proceeded to unlock, saying: "This is my treasure." His lady relatives watched him intently. He took out two rolls of what seemed to be manuscript; the one, apparently new and fresh; the other discolored with age. The latter he handed to Lura.

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"You read French?" he asked.

"Yes, Eugene, but surely you don't expect me to unravel these dim hieroglyphics?"

"That, I think, is an authentic history of the first few years of the residence in this country of our forefathers, the Perrines, after leaving France; and this," he added, unrolling the other parcel, "is my translation of it. And—

> 'Should you ask me whence these stories?
> Whence these legends and traditions,
> With the odors of the forest,
> With the dew and damp of meadows,
> With the curling smoke of wigwams?—
> I should answer, I should tell you,'

I received them from my father several years ago. He wished me to translate it, so that, as he said, some very curious family records might not be lost. It had been in his possession since the death of his father, and he continually kept purposing to translate it, or rewrite it in French, or have it printed, anything rather than have it lost. But you know how a thing may be neglected, and my father was indolent for many years through ill health, and I made the translation simply to please him, at the time, but I prize it highly now for itself, as it is, no doubt, a record made by my own great-grandfather, Victor Lagrange, who, with his employer, left France just before the stormy days of '93."

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"What was his employment?" asked Adele. "Seems to me your ancestors should all have been kings and queens."

"What! and been shaved by La Guillotine?"

"Oh no, Eugene, kings and queens, and reigned happily forever."

Eugene laughed. "I'm very certain they were not kings, and I'm equally certain that my great grandfather came here as tutor to the son, daughter and ward of Charles Perrine, and afterwards married Virginie, the daughter. The Perrines, by the way, were descendants of a long line of patrician ancestors; but, on coming here, they were only refugees, with probably a few remnants of their wealth, and caste was forgotten or ignored, titles were laid aside, and in this land that had so lately thrown off allegiance to kingly rule, the daughter of the last Marquis of Temeraire gave her hand to her teacher, the son of her father's former bailiff. If she ever regretted it, my wise forefather gives no hint of it to his descendants. I think you said, Aunt Marie, that your late husband's first name was 'Perrine.'"

"Yes, that was his mother's maiden name, and our old house in the suburbs of Baton Rouge, that we occupy sometimes, was built by Mr. Ashleigh's grandfather, Gustave Perrine, as shown by his name and the date of building cut in the stone over the

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doorway. The old place is Lura's now; the family has kept up some Old-World customs, and this is one of them: The house can never be sold out of the family, and the eldest inherits it."

"And is the name of Perrine extinct?"

"Yes; Gustave Perrine had but one child, 'Elise,' my husband's mother. He and his wife both died at middle age, within a few weeks of each other, and they lie buried on the plantation near Baton Rouge. There, too, were laid the remains of mother and father Ashleigh and my husband."

"There is no doubt of our relationship, I'm sure, and I think this little story will probably explain how the brother and sister happened to drift so far apart. My father was very sure his grand parents had lived in Montreal quite early in life, and in the beginning of the present century. Our home for all these years has been the house occupied by Victor Lagrange. He, I find by the family register, lived to be quite old, but I never saw him. My father, at the time of his marriage, had the old house renewed a good deal, but my mother dying two or three years afterwards, his interest in the place died with her, and I'm afraid you'll find things sadly out of order."

"Did your father die at home?" asked Mrs. Ashleigh.

"Yes. His medical advisers thought his life might

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have been prolonged, possibly for years, if he would go to a warmer climate, but he'd never consent. He seemed to grow more attached to the old home as his health grew feebler."

"Are you at all like your father?" asked Lura.

"Personally, I am very much like him; but his was the purest, noblest spirit, the most refined and delicate mind, I ever met with in a man. I know I am not over partial; men and women who knew him all his life would bear me out in my assertion. When you see my mother's picture you will find no resemblance to me. You may condemn my judgment, and I may be a little color blind, as it were, but to my eyes, none, not even the best types of Madonnas, have faces to equal her's in its expression of purity and trust. When my father was unable to leave his room, this picture was carried and placed where he could have it continually in his sight. I think it was the last thing his dying eyes recognized."

"And how long did you say he had been dead?" asked Mrs. Ashleigh.

"Less than two years. I've been in France a few months since he died. I had been in Europe when quite a lad, with my father; in fact I don't remember ever being anywhere without him; we were constant companions, and the best of friends. After my mother's death, my nurse was an elderly maiden great

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aunt, but my nursery was adjoining my father's sleeping room, and I always had my lessons in his study. I have missed him more than I can tell you."

The young man's voice was solemn and tender, and his eyes were ineffably sad. After a few minutes of silence he continued:

"In the last year or two of my father's life, he often spoke of a too long delayed journey into the South, to seek out, if living, any descendants of Gustave Perrine and Celie Davenal, son and ward of Charles Perrine, emigrant. I promised him that I would do the work that his devotion to me had made impossible till his health failed. After his death I found myself considerably shaken from my long service in his sick room. My friends advised a change, but it would have been imprudent, at that season and in my state of health, to have ventured south. As you know, I went to Europe, and of my return, my visit and search in the south you know already. That my search has been more than rewarded I hope I need use no words to assure you."

"Oh!" exclaimed Adele, "Cousin Eugene, we've been so happy since you found us out in that wilderness of a hotel in New Orleans; it's seemed like having papa back again," and two bright tears fell on Eugene's hand, as she pressed her face upon it. Lura sat silently gazing across the lake. The water was

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bright with sunshine, or shadowed for an instant by a fleecy cloud, and fretted into tiny waves by the light wind. Mrs. Ashleigh sighed softly and said:

"Yes, Eugene, we have all been much rested in knowing you, and we feel great protection in having a gentleman in the family on whom we can depend, and whom we may treat with the easy familiarity of a relative, though a distant one."

"Oh, never mind the exact shade of relationship, Aunt Marie; such things adjust themselves. Congeniality of temper and tastes and fraternity of feeling are much more to me than the closest ties of consanguinity. And who knows?" he added, pulling Adele's long braids; "Beauty and I may marry some day."

How her screams of laughter rang out over the lake and resounded through the woods, as Adele sprang up, with glowing cheeks, and folded her camp stool over her cousin's face. When the merriment had subsided, Lura declared herself chairman of the assembly, and proceeded to call it to order, adding that it was high time to begin the business of the meeting, which was the reading of the manuscript.

"Here," she said, "have we traveled a thousand miles, with the avowed purpose of traveling a thousand more after this mighty mystery shall have been unfolded, yet we dally and laugh and talk nonsense,

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as if we were going to summer and winter on this bank."

"If we should," said Adele, "maybe we'd find some lotus flowers. Everything's so quiet, I do believe there must be some somewhere near," and she stood up, looked about and sniffed the air as if she really believed what she said.

"I saw some poppies in a corn field we passed, and some in a cottage garden; they're what you smell, and I think when you say *quiet*, you mean *dull*," said Eugene.

Mrs. Ashleigh consulted her watch.

"My dears, whether there be lotus or poppy in the air, or only our own selves to make us forgetful of time, the forenoon is past, and we will have our luncheon before commencing the reading."

"Is it possible?" asked Lura; and Adele, with an exaggerated expression of grief: "'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.' I am sick for the reading, and, if I neglect my dinner I shall have a combination of distempers that may prove fatal, so I shall miss the story entirely. So, come, lend a hand Monsieur, my cousin; and you must not eat very much or you'll have to smoke two cigars and take a nap, and then, as Jehu calls it, the evening will be half gone."

Eugene promised temperance in both eating and smoking as he assisted in unpacking the hampers.

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Certainly the pains he had taken to insure a nice and plentiful lunch were amply rewarded, and another hour flitted by as the happy party lingered about their gypsy repast. When the baskets were repacked, and Eugene was indulging in the one cigar that Adele declared was all he must have, and forthwith took possession of his cigar case, he again produced the manuscript.

"Now," he said, and put in puffs of smoke for punctuation marks, "I suppose I might have read this to you in New Orleans, or I might have waited till we were in my own home in Montreal, but I had such a tremendous fancy to read it here by Lake Manitou, where, I am sure, the events spoken of transpired."

"Oh, Eugene!" said Adele, "you are too delightfully romantic! I'd have been so impatient to have everybody know it all, I couldn't have waited."

"You forget how long I waited without knowing there was anybody in the world who would care to know of it at all, and the tramping I had to find you was enough to cool any degree of impatience. I could very well wait a few weeks longer, and have everything as it is to-day. I'll tell you, too, before beginning, that in the translation I have modernized anything that was quaint or peculiar in the phraseology wherever I could do so without impairing the sense. Now,

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Aunt Ashleigh and Lura, you are comfortable, are you? Here, Adele, take this cushion by me, and if you see a great, sinful mosquito coming to dine upon me, let loose your wrath and protect the innocent."

Eugene seated himself on a rug, supporting his shoulders against a tree trunk, and obedient Adele, armed with a large fan, threw herself beside him, rested her elbow on the cushion and her chin in her hand, and so prepared to listen.

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CHAPTER III.

A HOME IN THE FOREST.

In all the broad, pleasant land of America there was not a more quietly lovely spot than Lake Manitou, with its surrounding plains and forests, in the Northwestern Territory, in the month of June, 1793. How brightly shone the morning sun, burnishing the tops of the ancient trees, and lighting up each drop of dew on the untrodden turf, while the lake itself shone like molten silver. Birds warbled their joyous songs, squirrels darted here and there, existence was rapture, and there was nothing of higher life to make fearful these wild, beautiful creatures. Nothing? There, a little way west of the lake, stands a cabin built of boughs and trunks of trees, a rude structure, the work of men. The door swings back on its hinges, and three children, two little girls of eight or nine years, and a boy of twelve, step outside, followed by a tall youth of nineteen or twenty. With merry chatter they walk down to the brink of the lake. The appearance of the party is not such as might have been

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expected in a scene like this. The two dainty little girls looked the patrician from the crowns of their heads to the soles of their high-heeled boots. Every article of their clothing, as well as their words and gestures, betokened the carefully-reared children of some highly civilized land. The boy, whom they addressed as Gustave, or Gussie, though bright and daring as a boy could be, yet had more the air of city streets and gay drawing-rooms than of the green forests around him. The children addressed the young man as Monsieur Lagrange, and in their behavior toward and their conversation with him, he was evidently teacher by arrangement, and companion, friend and playfellow by all the laws of congeniality and by all the circumstances of the happy chance that had brought them together. They stood on the margin of the lake chatting and laughing. Monsieur Lagrange looked toward the east, where the sun, fairly above the horizon, flooded the woods with glory. With a glance and a motion of his hands he directed the eyes of the children toward the east. Instantly the four pairs of hands were uplifted, and the four voices rang joyously out in their morning hymn to the sun:

Hail the light! Oh new-born day
Drive the night far, far away!
Let the gracious, golden bars
Hide away the beauteous stars.

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Bring us hope and joy and peace,
From all pain a swift release.
Hail the light! Oh new-born day,
From our sight drive sin away!

Hail the light! Oh new-born day,
To our sight bring wisdom's ray.
Let us by our works and ways
Render gratitude and praise
To the great and awful *Will*
That upholds and guards us still.
And where'r our feet may stray,
Still, kind Nature, lead the way;
And when life's sweet day is past,
Hide us in thy heart at last.

The last notes of the song trembled and fainted, and died away amongst the trees; and the young faces, bright as the morning, turned to Lagrange:

"Ah, Monsieur," said Gustave; "how jolly it will be when the boat is built, and we can paddle out, all over this beauty of a lake."

"But," interposed the smaller and fairer of the girls, "what was it the queer, quiet man told papa about the Manitou of the Indians?"

"Oh, Celie!" laughed Gustave, "that is only an old story; I don't even remember it for two days."

"What was it, Monsieur Lagrange? I've forgotten it too," said the other girl, the gypsy of the party. "Tell it us, Monsieur Victor," she said, coaxingly.

Then, turning to her fair-faced companion, she twined her arm about her, lifted he head defiantly, and shook one little hand at the water:

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"Don't be frightened, Celie, dear; nothing shall hurt you."

"The Indian legend," said Victor Lagrange, "that Mr. Haines told to us some time since, is, that Manitou, the Great Spirit, or Master of Life, claims this lake for his own; and so, of course, it is sacred to his use. There is no visible inlet; which seems to be an unfathomable mystery to the natives; but the pretty creek I showed you yesterday is its outlet. I know the lake is very deep, but the Indians say it is bottomless—that it is the great stairway to the center of the earth, and the prison-house of the spirit of evil; that Manitou descends into this terrible region to chastise his adversary, who is held in captivity for a thousand years. They say when the waves rise high, and the waters moan, and the trees lash with their branches, Manitou is below; the thunder is his terrible voice, and the lightning is the flash of anger from his eyes."

"Does Mr. Haines ever fish here?" asked Gustave.

"No; but I think he has refrained from it simply because he had no inclination to do otherwise. He is of an accommodating, indolent temper; cares nothing for angling, and if he wishes the fish for food, he may easily supply himself from the little creek. But this is not all the story of the lake. Besides being the entrance to the dwelling place of the spirit of evil, it

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has a subterranean connection with the great lakes, in the form of a wide, rapid river; and, ages ago, the red men were able to travel by means of this passage, and surprise and destroy their enemies. But as the nations grew weak and wicked, Manitou, first impatient, then angry, took from them the power of traversing this underground way."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Gustave. "Another instance of what papa has often told us; all nations tell how much more accommodating their gods used to be. I wouldn't like to trust a god that would sport with me like a boy; or give me some great blessing when he feels kindly, then, in a fit of anger, or because he is the stronger, take it from me."

"We have no god like that;" said Lagrange. "The laws of nature are the laws of the great ineffable essence of life, whatever that may consist of, and wherever it may be found, and they are unchangable. They are the same, to-day and forever. There is but little more of the legend the Indians have concerning this little lake, and it is, that whenever any person attempts to sail a boat, bathe, or catch fish in its waters, Manitou commands the spirit of evil to arise in the form of some terrible aquatic monster; huge, hideous, oh, horribly hideous; a very Imanus of ugliness, the sight of which drives the trespasser mad. It does no bodily violence, as no human thing is allowed to die

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in these waters. So you understand it will be impossible for any of us to be drowned here. Eh, Celie, are you frightened?"

He took the hand of the timid little girl reassuringly. "Ah, there is the mother beckoning us to breakfast."

"Home!" exclaimed gypsy Virginie, throwing her hands out rapturously. "This is home like all innocent things have homes. It is so quiet and sweet amongst green trees and flowers and birds and squirrels. It is like papa reads us from the great Rousseau."

"No regrets, no longings for any of the gay cities we have seen? Not even Paris?" asked the teacher.

"No indeed!" the children answered altogether, and little Celie clinging to his hand added: "I want to live any where with Virginie and Gussie, Papa and Mamma Perrine, and you, Monsieur Victor," and she glanced brightly up at the young man as she caressed his hand. Nothing could well be simpler than the way of life of this family. Their few articles of furniture belonging to civilized life showed evidence of long journeys and rough carriage. Some folding chairs, a writing desk of elegant form and finish, several fine pictures, a few small mirrors, were the only signs, besides a collection of books of a former life of refinement enjoyed by the dwellers in this cabin in the wilderness. There were rustic seats, formed of

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the twisted boughs of young trees, and the table about which the family gathered for the morning meal was of the most primitive workmanship. Yet, the table service—it should have been placed first in the list of articles denoting the class of these wanderers—was a marvel of beauty and taste from the white linen that covered the rough board to the smallest piece of China, silver or crystal placed thereon. In the center, from a tall *epergne*, drooped beautiful flowers of the season; sweet wild violets and roses, mingled with white star flowers, all half hidden by trailing vines, and delicate, long ferns.

Monsieur Perrine, the father of the family, was probably forty years old; tall, slender, dark, of quick speech and movements. His whole make up plainly indicated the wanderer; yet his glance was so kindly as his dark eyes rested on wife, child, friend or servant, his voice was so rich and soft, and caressing, it was impossible to imagine him trudging alone, or pitching his tent at night with no kind voice to answer him, and no cheerful eyes to look into his across the watch-fire.

He sat at table, now gazing first at one bright child face, then another, then at his wife, his "Brownie," she was nicknamed because of her brown hair and eyes, then glancing quickly at Victor to see if he

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had caught the flash of wit in some remarks of Gustave. He watched them all, forgetting his duties.

Madame Perrine poured out for each one the cup of fresh milk, and then Virginie, leaving her chair, threw her arms about her calmly smiling father, exclaiming: "Please, papa, I'm starving!"

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CHAPTER IV.

WHY THEY CAME?

LESS than a year ago before this pleasant June, Charles Perrine, Marquis de Temeraire was one of the best-known men in Paris. The last of a noble house, excepting his young son and daughter, he looked out each day from his lofty windows with troubled eyes. On a sunny day in September he rode alone with his wife along the streets of Paris. They occupied a plain little carriage, such as any citizen might have owned, and there was no sign in dress or equipage to offend the most radical republican. As they rode along they talked of the state of the times. They met friends and acquaintances, and questions were asked and answered by glances, questions that dare not be put into words. The National Convention was in session. Spies were every where. The Marquis guided his horses into a quiet street, and continued his conversation with his wife.

"I see no other way, Elise; we must go if we can. We must leave Paris—leave France."

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"But where shall we go?" asked the lady with white lips. "And how can we go?"

"Your last question is most difficult to answer; but, we can try. If we fail to make our escape (I feel now that to attempt to leave Paris is nothing less than flight) we will fare as badly, but probably not worse than if we remain of our own will. If we succeed, we can go to America, and in that new republic, established in part by our own countrymen, we may rid ourselves of the dread that continually haunts us here."

"So the concessions of the king are all for nothing?" and the lady sighed.

"All that the king can concede now will not appease the revolutionists. They claim justice, retribution, vengeance, really, for long ages of tyranny and oppression. The tiger instinct is aroused, and nothing will appease it but patrician blood. If I had but myself to think of, my decision would be to stay, and stand or fall with my class; but you, dear, and the children—for me it would be constant action until some revolutionist's blade or bullet should give me my quietus, or a lingering imprisonment. I should die, or live miserably. I might choose to dare fate in my own person for the sake of country, but—we must go. If we reach America, we can live in some one of the towns or cities that have sprung up as if by magic along the eastern border, or travel to the west of the great continent,

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and there, in some unbroken forest, build up a home for ourselves and children."

After that day preparations for emigration went on rapidly, but secretly, in the household of the Marquis de Temeraire. Too often has the old story been told of those fearful times, of the difficulties of leaving Paris to need repetition here. A few faithful friends knew of their intended voyage, others supposed only a visit to the country place of the family. In secret, good-byes were said, and kisses, such as are given the dying or dead, were exchanged. Then, with one last sigh for beautiful Paris, the adventurers bade farewell forever to the gay capitol and their title of nobility. When they landed at New York, they were simply Monsieur and Madame Perrine, or Americanized, Mr. and Mrs. Victor Lagrange, a son of a former business manager of the Marquis, accompanied them as teacher for the children, and two servants, husband and wife, an elderly couple, though leaving La Belle France with many tears, would not be separated from their kind patrons. The mother, children, and serving woman, Pauline Vendre, were established in the city of New York for the remainder of that first winter in the new world; but the restless spirit of Mr. Perrine, urged on by Victor, and even old Jacques Vendre, seemed to have caught a fever for adventure, and could not wait for spring. The three, accompanied

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by a half a dozen more young men, eager for sport, set out for the northwest territory. They said they would hunt and trap; but it was the intention of Charles Perrine, if he found the western country at all as it was represented, to build a home and remove thither with his family. After leaving Lake Erie, they followed the Maumee river in its southwesterly direction, finally leaving it, still pursuing the same course until they came upon the marshy banks of the Ouabache. All about here were fine hunting grounds, and the natives of the Miami and Pottawatomie tribes were friendly and communicative, while the whites, by their ready adoption of the wild life of the savages, many of whom spoke a broken French language, by numerous presents, and more than all by showing a spirit of confidence, and a well feigned belief in all their stories about the country, soon established the most amicable relations, and were never at a loss for guides and assistants. Victor Lagrange soon became an especial favorite with the Indians, because of the interest he manifested in all their customs, and the pains he took to learn their language. To the old warriors he was most deferential, but was hail fellow with all the young braves. The long journey, cumbered as they were with the many necessaries for that season of the year, was enlivened with many pleasant passages. After a day or two of loitering along the

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Ouabache, the Indians told their new friends that they were not far from a sacred lake, and, if they wished, they should see it. On asking if it was large, they were told "not so large as the big sea water," meaning Lake Erie, probably, or any other large body of water they had ever seen, "but large enough for the purpose of Manitou." They asked the name of the lake. "Manitou," answered an old Indian, most reverently. The whites, eager to find out all they could of this strange wild land, scarcely rested now, so eager were they to behold Lake Manitou. It was a clear winter afternoon. They were trudging rather wearily along through the snow, talking but little. Suddenly, as they neared the edge of the woods, the savages halted, stretched their arms forward and lowered their heads.

An old warrior advanced a yard or two ahead of the party, exclaiming:

"Gitche Manitou! look forth on thy children with blessing and kindness. We have brought the pale face through the hunting grounds of our tribes in peace; we have set his feet on the verge of thine own kingdom. The pale face has taken the red man by the hand and called him brother. He is swift of foot, and sure of eye, and true of heart. Gitche Manitou will deal with the pale face as he deals with the red man."

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While the Indian addressed his god, explaining their position, and broadly hinting to him what he was expected to do, the tired explorers looked about them. In the midst of an unbroken forest of beech, oak and sycamore trees, lay this little body of water, not more than five miles long, and three miles wide. Yet it was so quiet, so perfectly as if it had been but newly made and placed there; the snow was untrodden, the trees unbroken, and with the background of a magnificent sunset, the scene might have awakened feelings of reverence even in civilized breasts. Charles Perrine felt a glow, as he would had the whole been any other perfect thing. He was glad of so beautiful a thing in nature, as he would have rejoiced over a dashing cataract, a solemn river, or a cathedral-like hill. When viewing any beauty of nature, he said to himself: "This could not have been lovelier or grander in any other stage of growth; I'm very glad I see it now."

He decided at once to make this region his dwelling place if the Indians would permit him. That night they pitched their tents close by an Indian village, about a mile from the lake. He made the acquaintance of the chief, an elderly man, very severe in manner. They were Pottawatomies. When Mr. Perrine approached Samoset, the chief, on the subject of building a home for himself and family near the lake, the

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old man first looked very grave; but the ready wit of the Frenchman smoothed away the difficulty by a package of fine tobacco. So a bargain was struck. Mr. Perrine selected the land he wished, paid a liberal price for it, and listened to Samoset's injunctions concerning Manitou. He wished his god treated with due deference. Mr. Perrine bowed and smiled his acquiescence, but felt that if he should only keep in the good graces of the Indians, their Manitou would be a small matter.

The land purchased, the whole party set to work at once with the utensils they had brought, and the work of building a log house of several rooms, was made holiday sport. Land about it was cleared for a garden, a farm, or whatever it might grow to be through the next season. Victor Lagrange and Jacques remained to take care of their new home and continue the improvements, when Mr. Perrine and his new friends and three or four Indians went eastward for the mother and children.

They arrived in the early part of June. The children were in raptures with everything they saw, and at once won the hearts of the savages by their loving ways and childish confidence. Gaily went on the work of planting, and, though many mistakes were made, by the time the novelty of farming and gardening had worn off, a very creditable amount of skill had been attained.

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About the house bloomed flowers that were new to the soil and climate, but under the fostering care of Mrs. Perrine, these tender natives of France throve well, and she felt herself not quite an exile, since so much beauty, dear and familiar through many years, greeted her in her new home. If she sighed as she dropped the little black globes into the strange soil, she smiled when the green plants grew about her, like newly arrived friends. She sometimes thought they had new grace and vigor, and hope grew in her heart that something better and greater than anything she had yet known—something nobler, purer and truer than she had known as a dweller in cities—might blossom into her own life here in the wilderness.

Afterwards, she knew what was going on in Paris, while she was quietly, and, a little regretfully, beautifying her new home. She knew how the frenzied populace, urged on by a few demons of vengeance, had made a pandemonium of France; how, in the Tuileries, the Swiss guard had been slain, and the palace sacked; how the band of three hundred paid assassins had murdered five thousand victims, with every outrage that brutality could invent; how the king had been voted to death, and the queen followed in the same bloody path in a few months. She knew how the laden carts formed an almost unbroken procession, on their way to the guillotine, the only industry left.

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Mrs. Perrine, shuddering at these horrors, shedding tears for innocent creatures who had fallen in the slaughter, yet knew the revolution was not without cause. She knew of the burdensome taxes, the extravagant court, the tyrannical nobility and priesthood. She knew that the very timbers of which the guillotine was built had been watered by the tears of an enslaved peasantry. The suffering was horrible, the sights were sickening beyond description in that red reign of terror; yet it was only in proportion to its cause. That it seemed otherwise was because, unlike the galling tyranny that produced it, it was rapid in its work, instead of dragging on for many bitter years.

So, planting her garden, assisting in the house work, teaching the children, rambling through the green pleasant woods about the lake, and miles away, sometimes following the little creek till it emptied into the beautifully clear, but treacherous Tippecanoe river, Mrs. Perrine had but little unoccupied time, and regrets seldom came to mar her peaceful days. Her dear ones were about her. They were healthful, happy in themselves and in each other. Every day added some new beauty to the home, some unexpected wealth in the field, or some wonderful charm in the woods, the water, or the sky above them. Life was full of joyful surprises. To hearts in tune with such pure influences, there is nothing sweeter, holier, or more ennobling than the constant communion with Nature.

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CHAPTER V.

NEIGHBORS.

THE Perrine household had been in their new home but two or three days when, one morning, as they were all out on the clear space in front of the house busily planning the day's work, they were joined by a tall, serious looking man, and a girl probably twelve years old. The man lifted his hat and bowed gravely; but Mr. Perrine greeted him with effusion, taking him by both hands, and thus presenting him to his wife and children. Victor and Jacques exchanged greetings with the man and the girl, and then Mr. Perrine, taking the child by the shoulders, said:

"And here, Miss Constance, are the companions I promised you last winter; and this is the mother. You shall come here often and be just another little girl for her to pet and spoil."

Mrs. Perrine stooped to kiss Constance, who, glanced rapidly over the face bent above her, threw her arms about the neck of her new friend; then

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while a look of sadness crept into the eager blue eyes she whispered: "My mamma's dead."

Mrs. Perrine pressed the young head to her bosom and kissed the yellow hair. From that moment there was the most perfect understanding between them. This was the "queer, quiet man," Mr. Haines. Both he and his daughter spoke French, but with a strong English accent, and a mingling of the patois in use by Americans, French and Indians. Mr. Haines told the Perrines that for two years he had lived in a hut a mile or two from the lake, and in that time had seen no white man, heard no word of his own tongue excepting in conversation with his daughter. He told them too, at intervals, in a disconnected way, a sentence or two at a time, that he had been thirty years from England; that he was but a boy of eighteen when he left home, and had been connected, as Secretary, or something of the kind, to the staff of General Thomas Gage, commander of all his Majesty's forces in North America. That when the proclamation was issued to the French inhabitants of the Illinois country, informing them that they would be granted the liberty of their Catholic religion if they chose to remain, but if they preferred going away, they could do so, and sell their estates, provided it be to subjects of his Majesty, that he, and several other adventurous young men, feeling curious to see these

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settlements in the interior of this great wild continent, had visited Vincennes, a trading post on the Ouabache. The English changed the name to Fort Sackville. Here these young wanderers established a sort of headquarters, where they came to rest at intervals from their trapping and hunting expeditions.

They went as far north as the great lakes, and made several trips to Atlantic seaports to barter their forest harvest for the necessaries of their wild life, and to catch glimpses of the civilization they had abandoned. All through the years of the war between England and the colonies, these free spirits heard but infrequent rumblings in the distance of the changes going on. One day on returning from a long winter excursion into the frozen northwest, they found that Fort Sackville had surrendered to Colonel George Rogers Clarke. This was the third change of government they had witnessed, and, as they sat about their camp fires and talked of it, it seemed a long time since the Fleur de Lys had floated over the stockade of Vincennes.

Then the trappers went east, and some of the party returned to England. It was on this trip that John Haines met and loved Constance Derwent. He entered into business in Boston, and was married within a few months. Once after that he had been in Europe. Three years before meeting the Perrines,

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his wife had died. All this was told incidentally by scraps, not one of the new friends felt they could take the liberty of asking questions. One day when he mentioned his wife in conversation with Mrs. Perrine, she asked: "Was your wife young, Mr. Haines?" And he answered crisply:

"Twenty when I married her; thirty when she died. Caught cold one night—we went out a great deal."

Another time he came in when Mrs. Perrine was brushing the long golden hair of Constance into loose fluffy curls. He stood looking at his daughter for a minute or two, then sighed, saying:

"How much you're growing like your mother, Conny," and, passing by her, he handed to Mrs. Perrine a small velvet case, which he took from his bosom. It held an exquisite picture, painted on ivory, of a fair English face, and, as he said, Conny was very like it. The same broad, low forehead; the same pink and white complexion, though Constance, the younger, was much browned by the sun and wind; the same laughing blue eyes and tender mouth, and the same cloud of golden hair. Mrs. Perrine gazed long on the pictured face, while the queer, quiet man turned aside and leaned on the back of a rustic chair. When she handed the case back to him, she said: "Thank you, my friend, what a lovely face it is!"

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He dropped it into the bosom of his loose hunting shirt, saying:

"Madam Perrine, her face was perfect, but it was the least of her excellencies." Then he turned on his heal and walked rapidly away.

Conny remarked: "Dear Mrs. Perrine, you should have known papa when we had mamma yet. He was so jovial and pleasant; and mamma was so very pretty, and dressed so beautifully and was so gay. But after mamma died, papa and Grandpapa Derwent used to walk all about the house and be so still, and just look at each other, and whenever papa and I went to the cemetery, we were sure to find grandpapa there."

Mrs. Perrine asked: "Had you no grandmother, no uncles, nor aunts?"

"Grandmamma died when I was a little baby; and I had no uncles nor aunts on papa's side. I have an uncle Gerald Derwent; he paints pictures, and he's somewhere in Europe now, in Rome, I think. Papa got tired of staying at home, so we came here, where he used to hunt long before he ever saw mamma, but he's tired of staying here, and he talks of taking me to grandpapa's where I can have teachers. Then he will go and find Uncle Gerald. But I don't know what he'll do. He's tired of everything, he says, but me," and Conny sighed.

So it came to pass that little, loving, lonely Con-

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stance Haines came every day to the Perrine home and had lessons with the children from the mother or Victor; and she carried back with her to her father's rough hut, a regained spirit of childhood which she was about letting slip away in the companionship of her father. Mrs. Perrine also superintended the rearrangement of all the simple articles in Conny's home, helped her plant beds of flowers, and she and the other children gathered from the woods wild ivies and eglantines to be trained over the unhewn logs of the house. To this new order of things Mr. Haines made no objection, neither did he assist; but simply looked on, sometimes with the thought that he and Conny had been sorely cheated out of their natural right to happiness when death claimed the wife and mother. But if the taciturn father showed no gratitude for all the kindness of his new friends, his neglect was amply atoned for by the warm-hearted daughter. She imparted to the Parisians all the forest lore she had gathered from her father and the Indian children. She explained to them how to tell the points of the compass by the moss on the tree trunks, told them the meaning of the loud tapping high over their heads amongst the trees, and showed them the crested woodpecker at work. She dissolved the mystery of the distant drumming that came from grassy meadows, and led the children where they could surprise coveys

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of pheasants, and be almost deafened when they arose. She pointed out the long lines of migrating wild geese when their discordant "honk" broke the stillness; and told of the sort of almanac that the savages and other woodsmen compile from these, and other ever recurring sights and sounds. She taught them how to tame the red breast robin and wild pigeons, so that after a year or two the children had hundreds of feathered friends. She told them all the Indian words she knew, and what she had learned of the duties and privileges of Samoset, the chief. She showed them old Naoman, the medicine man, and laughingly declared she had walked miles and miles in ambush, trying to discover what herbs the great physician gathered to work charms with, and cure diseases; but he must have had eyes where she never saw them, for after walking until she was ready to drop, the Indian would lean on his staff and chuckle to himself for a minute or two, then turn about and go back to his wigwam without so much as picking a leaf; and he always looked at her in such a maliciously knowing way next time they met. Such stories and explanations had an inexpressible charm for the little Parisians. So the seasons succeeded each other, till a year went by, and Mr. Haines said nothing of Europe for himself or school for Conny. He continued his pensive, listless round, planting a little,

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hunting, fishing, reading Mr. Perrine's books, but oftenest silently watching the four children at their lessons, work, or recreations.

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CHAPTER VI.

BORN WITH THE NEW MOON.

ADELE half arose and took the manuscript from Eugene's hand. "Oh, cousin Eugene," she said, "stop just a minute, do, and let me say something."

Eugene looked at her quizzingly, then answered: "Pray, do air your ideas, my dear, or I fear we may have a case of spontaneous combustion."

Adele, with her glowing face and sparkling eyes, seemed to scarcely need the faculty of speech to clothe her ideas.

"What is it, Adele?" asked Mrs. Ashleigh.

Adele seemed to be mentally solving some tremendous problem, in which her sister was an important figure. She sat looking at her as if she were speaking. Lura laughed, and pulling at Adele's sleeve, said:

"What is it, Sis, and why do you look at me in that queer fashion?"

Adele drew a deep breath. "Well, it is the strangest! Don't you all see? There are others, absent but

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not forgotten, whose ancestors lived here in the woods long ago."

"What *do* you mean?" asked Lura.

"My dear, beautiful, betrothed sister; I mean Derwent Marshall."

And Adele rolled off her rugs and cushions to her sister's feet, and patted the rosettes on her slippers. Lura laughed, the pink tinge in her cheeks deepened slightly, yet she protested she thought Adele had gone crazy.

"Now," said Adele, with mock dignity, "let me prove my sanity and my clear-sightedness all at the same time. Don't you remember what my brother-in-law elect told us one night last summer, up in the White Mountains; that lovely, moonlight night, when he wished he ever could put moonlight on canvass; and he told us of that ancient, many-times removed uncle, Mr. Derwent, for whom his romantic mother named him, and who was a fine artist? Now, do you see anything?"

Mrs. Ashleigh and Lagrange listened, looking from one to the other of the girls. Then Eugene asked:

"Is it really true, Lura?"

"Yes; now that Adele reminds me of it, I do remember Derwent telling us that it was a never-failing source of wonder to his business-following family that he should dabble in paint, as there had not been

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an artist in the family for several generations. But the old pictures, with Gerald Derwent's name in the corner, are a part of the family possessions that are never bought nor sold. They regularly descend to the eldest of the next of kin, according to the will of the artist; and Derwent considers it a peculiarly happy circumstance that his old bachelor uncle must hand them over to him bye and bye."

Lura told her little story with sweet demureness, the soft light, that was never found on land nor sea, coming and going in her brown eyes, and fluttering softly over the delicate cheeks. The summer wind, sweeping fitfully over the lake, ruffling it into tiny ripples, and stirring the fresh, green leaves overhead, came low and lifted the wandering tresses of her beautiful light brown hair. Eugene watched her much as a connoisseur might look at a rare work of art. His admiration for the beautiful seemed to be his strongest characteristic. Then he remarked absently:

"Derwent Marshall is a fine fellow. I like him immensely. He's a fortunate man, and I hope he'll be happy 'forever after.'"

Lura said softly:

"I hope he will;" and Adele, half sitting, half reclining at her feet, pinched the toes of her slippers, and cried:

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"Oh, yes, *I* hope he will; and I hope you will, too, Lura, goosie. Now don't think he's too good and grand for you; because, though he's as handsome as he can be and live, and, for aught we know to the contrary, he's good as gold, still, he's but 'a mon, for a' that.'"

"Oh, Adele, Adele!" interposed Lura. Mrs. Ashleigh shook her finger at her youngest, but she laughed, too. Eugene called, "hear, hear!" and "go on Portia, how wise we are! let us hear the rest of the exposition."

Adele, needing far less encouragement than this, did go on, holding fast to her sister's feet.

"You know very well, Lura, you are just as handsome as he is, and have as much money, if not more; and you are as good and sweet as ever Eve was before she was turned out of paradise. Lura! you do—you *do* look like that exquisite statue of Powers'."

"Oh, sister, please hush! Mamma, do make her be quiet."

But mamma was powerless. The whirlwind was in motion. Adele had arisen to her knees, and held her sister's hands instead of her feet, and talked close to her face.

"You should be a queen; and after you are married, ride away to the happy 'forever after' in a golden chariot. You should have a train of beautiful maids

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of honor. Flowers should be strewn in your way, and flags should be flying; your horses should all be snow white, and walk in time to angelic music."

"Oh, oh!" laughed Lura. "Angels and horses. I think I can induce Derwent or mamma to buy me a trick pony, at least. It's a sort of a circus you're talking about, isn't it?"

"There! you wet blanket!" and Adele rolled herself back to her rug and cushions. "You'll have a mother-in-law, and she'll show you more tricks than any circus pony, or even the heathen Chinee."

"How worldly wise for a small young lady," remarked Eugene.

"I'm disgusted; let us go back to the story of the 'long ago.' I'm tired of looking into the 'forever after.' Where do you suppose the house was built?"

"I really can not say; but somewhere not far from the creek—but here comes Jehu. The evening is half gone, according to his time-table. So the reading is adjourned till to-morrow, at this place. But isn't it strange about that Gerald Derwent? That is the greatest surprise of all. And how we will astonish Mr. Marshall when he joins us in Canada." Then turning to the hostler, "We will drive around the lake if we can make the trip before dark."

"Oh, that you can," the man answered, "and you can be in sight of the lake about all the way. 'T isn't far, and no great to see, either."

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But every foot of the way was interesting to the strangers. Adele speculated and wondered continually. Was it possible those children from Paris had walked over these very places? Had they seen any of these trees, and had they leaned against this one, or rested in the shade of that one? Might not their teacher have shown them that very stone when talking geology? or maybe rested on that little knoll for a practical lesson in botany? The circuit of the lake was made before they hardly knew they had started, and though they discovered no trace of their dead-and-dust ancestors, what they did see spoke well for the present incumbents. All about were comfortable farm houses with their neat and odorous gardens; wide fields of fast ripening grain; level, green pastures, from which the soft-eyed kine looked contentedly, and hundreds of other tokens of cheerful industry, and pastoral prosperity.

They arrived at the Central House in ample time to rest and refresh before the early tea, after which Adele proposed a walk. At the door Mrs. Ashleigh asked:

"Which way shall we go?" and half turned in the direction they had driven in the morning; but Adele objected.

"Don't go that way—we've been there; come this way. There, Eugene, give mamma your arm. Come

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Lura, this is north, isn't it? What a nice, wide street it is—only so soft—so sandy. This way looks older. All the houses we saw this morning look so new, as if not quite finished."

Truly, they found dwellings looking old enough in the north end of the village, some of them even dilapidated. Presently they came to the very last house, a tumble-down old shell, looking as if it only lacked the courage for the venture of rolling down the bank into the creek that crossed the street a few yards below it. This beggarly old landmark stood on the west side of the street; facing it was the tall white Pottawatomie flouring mill, with its great water wheel that was idle now, and lying deep in the shadow, while the setting sun glowed brightly on the glistening wall of the mill and lighted its many windows with crimson and flame.

"This is lonely," said Lura.

"Yes," Adele answered, "but I suppose not nearly so lonely as those refugee relatives of ours found it."

They had stopped and were looking about them. Where they stood the sunshine was yellow and warm on the sand, but further on, in the hollow where the willows drooped over the creek, it was twilight.

"Let us go down to the bridge," said Adele. "It will be a better view to stand there in the shade and look up here at the glow."

When they stood on the bridge she asked:

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"Do you think, cousin, that this is the creek that flows from Lake Manitou?"

"Yes, this is the outlet of the lake. It's not far, to follow the course of the stream; and, to-morrow, if you like, or some fine day while we are here, we might try tramping to the lake, by following the course of this stream."

"That would be delightful," declared both girls.

Mrs. Ashleigh, with a slight motion of her hand in the direction from which they had come, said:

"See," and they turned toward the sunlit town.

From where they stood, but a few roofs and chimneys were visible, and they were wrapped in a golden haze. The sunshine and the yellow sand seemed to meet and mingle, and one could not decide where the one ended and the other begun. The swarms of insects were trebly magnified, and sailed on rainbow wings. Birds flitting homeward carried tints of gold on their plumage.

"This is very beautiful, and full of rest; but we would better go now, it is getting chilly;" and Mrs. Ashleigh drew her light wool shawl close about her.

Adele sighed deeply, her most usual mode of expressing intense satisfaction.

"What a world full of beautiful things. Come, Lura, let us go up out of the vale, to the top of that delectable mountain."

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She took her sister's arm, with a sweet seriousness that covered like a veil of mist her glowing, tropical beauty.

"What a rare creature is our Adele," said Lagrange in a low tone to Mrs. Ashleigh.

"She is very much like her father," the lady answered, in a tone that implied all human perfections amply accounted for in that assertion. "He was the same warm-hearted enthusiast, and loved nature in all her moods as she does. But he suffered in the same measure that he enjoyed. What less delicately organized creatures would have passed by with indifference, caused him real pain. I fear much for my girl, and tremble, sometimes, thinking what the future may bring her."

Eugene pressed her hand as it lay on his arm, but said nothing; yet, he inly vowed to henceforth wear the colors of this beautiful, sensitive young cousin, and woe to the man or woman, but more particularly to the man, who should for one moment cloud her bright face. In silence they walked through the golden haze, and when they reached the hotel the sun was just dropping out of sight. Lura said something about letters that must be written. Mrs. Ashleigh was tired, but Adele begged to be allowed to remain out doors till the glory died out of the sky. She and Eugene walked up and down the sidewalk till the gor-

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geous yellow and crimson faded into cool gray, and the new moon, like a curve of silver, shone just above the horizon. They had walked in silence, but when Adele saw the crescent she said:

"Let me tell you a pretty little superstition I learned from Coral, the quadroon girl you admired so much down home," and, with a light pressure on his arm, she stopped, facing the west. "When you're in love, find out the lady's favorite flower; if possible, get one she has worn or handled; then, look at the new moon, thinking of her and holding against your heart her flower, and no matter how hopeless your case may appear, all shall be well, and your love will be returned."

"With charges paid?" Eugene asked quietly.

"Oh!" exclaimed Adele, with a gesture of impatience. "You haven't one bit of sentiment, and you're not in love at all. I believe, though, I'm glad of it. Take me in now."

Eugene made merry over her attempts to talk moonshine to him. He left her at her mother's door, but, after he had gayly bidden her good-night, a very serious masque dropped over his face, and when he reached the foot of the stairs and glanced at the new moon he fell to wondering what was Adele's favorite flower.

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CHAPTER VII.

TOLD IN THE READING ROOM.

THE hour was yet early, and Mr. Eugene Lagrange not being in that state of mind and body which must and will have solitude, sauntered into the reading room. There was quite a motley gathering, lounging, smoking and talking. He passed inside the door and looked about as it seems the common instinct of men to do when entering on new but rightful territory. He, being the greatest stranger in the house, was noticed by almost every person in the room, but not offensively so. These villagers took every occasion of treating strangers, and particularly those whom they suspected of being their superiors in the way of mental culture, or knowledge of the world, with a most conspicuous letting alone. Insatiably curious with regard to everything connected with new comers, they yet assumed a studied ignorance of the presence of any one worthy their notice. If the play could not go on without a lion, they played the lion themselves. The natives of Rochester were never astonished; they per-

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formed all the hazardous conversational gymnastics themselves, for the edification of the stranger within their gates. One gentleman who was earnestly talking of the affairs of government, and explaining how the whole machinery was as simple for him as spinning a top or rolling a hoop, and much less difficult than flying a kite, and continually keeping it before the people that political economy had been his favorite study, or in reality his holiday recreation before he was old enough to go to the public schools, now, with one eye on the stranger and the other on the man he had buttonholed, declared in a most elaborate drawl, and a much more extravagant oath than the subject demanded, that "The notion of a republic on the American plan was a barren ideality—nothing better than a rope of sand."

His speech had the desired effect; at least it had kindled a smile in the dark eyes of Mr. Lagrange as he settled himself in a listening attitude. The speaker grew radiant, after a slow melodramatic fashion. He drawled out heavy denunciations, so heavy he scarcely seemed able to manage them; and his oaths, mixed in promiscuously, were so distorted as to be hardly recognizable. In fact, it is to be questioned if a really respectable article of profanity would not have disdained to be considered of the same family. Eugene thought the peculiar drawl of the politician an affecta-

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tion, as he often made breaks and went whirring away like disordered clock-work. Mr. Vincent, coming in, and noticing his foreign guest, approached him, calling out in his strong, pleasant voice: "A pleasant evening, Mr. Lagrange. Do you need something for your room, or those of the ladies?"

"No, thank you, Mr. Vincent; we are all very comfortable. What I want at this minute can be supplied right here, and that is, to know who is yonder politician?"

Mr. Vincent laughed slyly, Eugene thought, and with a slight but significant motion of head and hand, he led the way to one side before answering.

"That," he said with the utmost solemnity, "is the Honorable Melville Warner, one of our leading men in law and politics."

"Honorable," Eugene repeated. "Well, I've seen a goodly portion of the footstool, but I have yet to find something to match a Yankee's love for high-sounding nick-names. You love them, I know, better than you do your presidents or your bibles."

Vincent laughed as he answered, "I assure you, Mr. Lagrange, it's not a nick-name."

"You don't mean to say"— Eugene went no further. The idea seemed too ridiculous for expression. He laughed immoderately.

"That Mr. Warner is a bona fide Senator? Cer-

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tainly I mean to say it." But he laughed as if he appreciated the stupendous joke as well as its effect on his guest. His keen, gray eyes were moist with mirth, and they twinkled ominously as he said:

"Come and be introduced. It will pay enormously."

Eugene felt that his host had spoken truly even if the acquaintance went no further than the sweeping bow with which the honorable Melville greeted him, and the velvety spoken assurance that he was "'dam glad to see him—half famished for the sight of a stranger." Then seizing him by the lapel, he added confidentially, "Tell you what, Lagrange, to a man of capacity this town is stagnation, literal stagnation! You are from New Orleans—excuse, Montreal. Well, thought I'd run up to Montreal, or some of the cheap Canadian towns up that way, for the summer; but, begawd, a man once into a profession, and the manager of his party besides, has darn little time to call his own. Last winter was in the Senate, down at Indianapolis. Thought I would take a day or two, run down to New Orleans—take my wife with me—she's the best woman God ever made; nearly breaks her little heart when I'm not quite"—here a significant motion, coupled with the very odorous breath of the honorable Mr. Warner, enabled Eugene to complete the broken sentence. "But," continued the Senator, "couldn't spare the time.

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Driven to death. And what do the masses care for it all? Not a — " and a tremendous volley of oaths came rolling and tumbling from Mr. Warner for the inundation of the masses.

Eugene expressed his regret that Mr. Warner should find himself the victim of that ingratitude for which republics are proverbial; but that the consciousness of duty performed was certainly a satisfaction.

"You're right, you're right, Lagrange, begawd you're right!" exclaimed the honorable Melville, with more emotion than there seemed to be room for, and with a gesture of impatience he whipped out his handkerchief and dashed it tragically across his eyes, blew his nose fiercely, then went on in a quavering voice, "Tell you what, Lagrange, when I think it all over it makes me weak and womanish."

Eugene's sense of the ridiculous was on the rack, but he was thoroughly amused. The man's air was so absurdly consequential. Mr. Warner lifted his hat and ran his fingers through his long, wavy brown hair, remarking in a tone he meant to be the very essence of confidence, "Do you know, Lagrange, sometimes I have it in my soul to cut the whole dam bother, and live simply?"

As Eugene had never heard the matter mentioned before, his ignorance of Mr. Warner's intention was

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wholly pardonable; but he was conscious of an attempt to throw into his countenance an expression of unbounded astonishment. His success was such as to encourage Mr. Warner to proceed.

"Yes, begawd, when I'm in the mood for rest and quiet, just let any man plank down the money, half price at that, for my home, my law library, my wife—no, begawd, I'd keep her—my horse and dog. I suppose now if some wide-awake, well-posted fellow wanted to step into a practice like mine, he'd expect to pay something handsome for it. Politics, in that case, would shift for itself as far as my party's concerned, and, *I'd be free!*"

"Then," asked Eugene, "what way of life would you pursue?"

"I'd plant me where the red deer feed—in the wild desert," declaimed Mr. Warner, with one hand pressed on his stomach and the other stretched toward the open window.

Eugene smiled a little broadly, coughed, readjusted his hat, found his mustache uncommonly refractory, pulled it, brushed it with his handkerchief, and at last so far rearranged himself as to answer:

"No doubt you find some respite from your legal and political duties, even now, in hunting and fishing. I understand that game of several kinds is abundant in your immediate vicinity, and your very convenient Lake Manitou holds great temptation for anglers?"

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"I do sometimes hunt, yes, I do," and Mr. Warner lowered his voice as if imparting a state secret; "but angling I have not indulged in for years. I have the best dog, begawd, in Indiana; blood as pure as Queen Victoria's. I have fishing tackle that cost hundreds of dollars, begawd; but, as I before remarked, no fishing for me in Manitou."

"I have been informed," said Eugene, "that, business aside, of course, the lake is the principal attraction of the village; and Vincent told me he rarely has other fish for his table than those from Manitou."

"That's true; begawd, that's so! People all round the lake, for miles, fish there, pic-nic there, make love and nearly marry there. They come from neighboring towns and cities with tents. They live there, on the water half the time for weeks; but I tell you, begawd, they're not wise; no, sir, knowing what they do, they're blasted fools. I've not been on the lake, nor willingly near it for ten years. I wouldn't take my wife out in a boat on Lake Manitou for a kingdom, begawd."

"Would you be so good as to explain to me your reasons for tabooing this very popular, and I must say, charming, little sheet of water?"

"Certainly; most certainly! I always warn strangers if I have the least shadow of an opportunity. I tell you, Lagrange," and the honorable Mr. Warner

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came a step nearer, placed the tip of one finger across the tip of the other, and half closed his eyes, as if bringing the subject to as fine a point as possible, "I tell you, begawd, folks here assure strangers that nobody was ever drowned in Manitou; and that's so, damned if it isn't. But the storm's gathering. One of these days, or nights, begawd, there'll be one of the most sickening, blood-curdling tragedies right here that the world has ever known. Then, sir, I tell you, begawd, telegraph wires will refuse to carry, and printing presses will rebel against recording the horrors that will come to pass right here. Then the associated press will have news that will be a drug on the market."

"But what do you mean?" Eugene asked, interested in spite of himself.

"I mean just this, begawd;" and Mr. Warner crossed his forefingers exactly at the second joint. Both men had become so absorbed in each other they failed to notice that every one in the room was listening intently to the conversation. "I mean just what happened to me and a friend when we were fishing one night, the last time I ever dropped line in Manitou. Our remarkable, our most wonderful presence of mind saved us. Any other two men, begawd, would never have been heard of. It was a lovely night in June. Everything was bright and peaceful as the garden of

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Eden before the Fall, begawd. The moon was half full, and shone on the broad leaves of the water plants till they looked like silver. The water was so clear we could see the stems of rushes to the depth of ten or a dozen feet. It wasn't more than ten o'clock. Our luck had never been better; boat was loaded till it almost dipped water, and we concluded to pull in and go home. But, begawd, just then the strangest, and, if I could believe it, the most unnatural thing happened; but I don't believe anything out of the course of nature ever did happen. Don't believe in miracles or in anything supernatural. First we heard a hollow, rumbling sound like distant thunder; but the hell and all of it was, it was below us instead of where we'd naturally expect thunder. Our boat commenced rocking; the lake was covered with white caps, and not a breath of wind, not a cloud to be seen in all the beautiful star-lit heavens, begawd! The moon still shone, and everything was peaceful but that gawd-dam lake. The roaring sound increased till it sounded like all the thunder I had ever heard gathered together and fused into one deafening, demoniac, steady roar. I was scared. We couldn't hear each other speak, but each understood that the other wanted to get out of that, and so we pulled for the shore. When we were within fifteen or twenty feet of it, there arose behind us, and within five feet

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of the boat, the most monstrous head, with mouth distended, I won't say how wide, but the monster loomed above us five or six yards high. My God! I found a gray hair in my head next morning. He made the night dark, and all the world was too small to hold that horrible roaring. My friend and I, though giving ourselves up for dead men, resolved to live as long as possible. We had the same thought, the same impulse. We jumped for the shore, and if you'll believe it, we landed side by side in the sedge where the water wasn't boot-top deep. We turned in time to see that demon draw our boat load of fish down his throat as easily as you'd swallow a homeopathic pill. We first crawled up amongst the trees and laid down—never said a dam word. The whale, sea-serpent, devil, whatever it was, turned round and round, and looked all over the lake, and, as we could then see, lashing the water with an enormous tail, till every part of the lake was in commotion. There was no other living thing in sight, and gradually the great head sank to the level of the water; then, with a tremendous flounder, and a snort like a young hurricane, it disappeared. The roaring died away, the water grew quiet, and in twenty or thirty minutes all was calm as usual on the lovely bosom of Lake Manitou. It may be so still, but since that night I have always covered my eyes if I have been forced to pass it.

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The remembrance of it is worse than anything Dante ever imagined."

Eugene thought, during this recital, that he heard, several times, something like suppressed laughter somewhere near him; but he wouldn't turn his head, not even move a finger, nor in the smallest way possible allow Mr. Warner to suppose him a doubtful or an inattentive listener. He heard him through in the most rapt manner, then asked:

"And what is your deduction, Mr. Warner? What is this thing, and where does he keep himself ordinarily? You've no doubt heard the legends of the Indians who were here a few years ago. You know they had great regard for Lake Manitou, and I've been told never desecrated it by appropriating either the fish or the water to their own uses. But you say you've no belief in anything supernatural, so you can not have adopted this superstition. I should be very glad to hear your theory."

"My theory is this," and Mr. Warner placed the the tip of his right forefinger in the center of his left palm, as if he had the theory right there, like a Jack-in-a-box. "You are right, I have no superstitions about me. This monster is a thing of nature, of course. Its birth was probably hundreds of years ago, may be before men lived here at all. It was here when this thriving agricultural district was occupied solely by

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the red men. In that prehistoric time when those monsters, now extinct, that then peopled the world were dying out in the ordinary course of nature, leaving the earth fitted for smaller and more intelligent growths of animal life, this one, through some chance, survived. It, very probably, began life when all this country was one body of water. But the course of nature went on, begawd; vegetation, coarse and rank, increased year by year. The aquatic monster grew, year by year. The great lake filled up gradually, the great fish betook himself to the deeper parts, that became fewer and fewer. Do you see? There was at last no deep, sea-like place left but this little lake, as we call it. There the Indians no doubt had glimpses of this creature, that must have had a larger territory and a smaller body a hundred years ago than he now has. As things have gone on, so things will continue to go on, begawd! You can make your own deduction, draw your own conclusion. The lake, in the ordinary course, must grow smaller? The islands in it grow larger, ditto the sea serpent. If he doesn't die, can you imagine anything more horrible than the devastation that will sweep over this country some time in the near future? Many farmers about the lake have within the last ten years missed from their fields cattle, sheep, hogs and even horses. They have damned the stock buyers who travel through the

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county, but they were as innocent as babes. You understand, as the body increases so will the eating capacity. Well. And if he does die, can you imagine the horrors of the epidemics that will be produced by his decaying body there in the water?" The honorable Mr. Warner, with his lariat of terrible facts tightened about the neck of his victim, proceeded to hang him between the horns of the dilemma, and then bade him good-night. He was too sensitive to stay and watch his struggles. He raised his hat and made such a bow as would have been creditable in Venice in her palmiest days. Then, glancing about the room, with a look gloomily fierce, he was gone.

Eugene looked about him. Smiles and ha-has met him on every side. He laughed in return, and, finding Vincent near him, he asked:

"What's the matter with Mr. Warner? Has any one else seen the sea serpent?"

Vincent replied, "I think, probably, the man who was with him that night saw it, but the truth of it is, they both saw it through a glass—a black glass bottle, or may be through a brown jug. On this occasion Warner and Jack Taylor were both roaring drunk, upset their boat and were pulled out of the water by Sol. Peabody, a farmer living close to the lake. He set up an old tent over them, as it was raining, and he found it impossible to take them to

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shelter. But Mel. sticks to his sea serpent. Sometimes I think he really believes the story himself."

"Only an exaggerated case of jim-jams," remarked a young fellow standing near, and holding his cigar in his fingers while he talked. "He had 'em before and since, but not quite so bad."

"I say, Mr. Lagrange," called another of the audience, as Eugene was about to leave the room, "may be you'd better not tell the ladies of Warner's aquarium, it may give them nerves."

Eugene laughed, and after exchanging a few more pleasant remarks with his new acquaintances, and receiving an epitomized history of the honorable Melville Warner, with a lively sketch of his character, education and professional abilities, he bade them good-night.

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CHAPTER VIII.

A RAINY DAY BRINGS A VISITOR.

NEXT morning the sun rose from behind a solid-looking bank of dark clouds, and the low muttering of thunder mingled with the dreams of Eugene Lagrange. Not at all strange was it that the pleasant day at the lake, the sunset walk, Adele's pretty little superstition about the new moon, and Mr. Warner's wonderful story, should range themselves into a most bewildering medley in Eugene's brain as he lay in the half waking sleep of the morning. The distant thunder was gathering all about him, growing louder and louder, while he guided a tiny shell of a boat over a boundless lake, with Adele clinging to him and urging, "Pull for the shore, steer straight for the crescent moon, the terrible creature can't endure moonlight." Then he walked on air through a golden haze, still with Adele, and, turning to tell her they must hurry, the grass plains were on fire, he found not sweet, childish Adele, but a beautiful,

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stately lady in bridal robes, who answered his glance with the liquid dark eyes of the little witch cousin gleaming through the misty veil. Lost in wonder he gazed at her till with a flash of childish fun she swept a parasol she carried across his eyes. It seemed like living flame, and, throwing out his arms to ward it off, he received in his hands an immense sunflower; at the same instant the crescent moon came so near he thought he could touch it with his hands; but the laughing face of Adele appeared between the horns, and she called "Eugene, Eugene—" and Mr. Lagrange sprang out of bed in a hurry, almost blinded by a flash of lightning, and sure enough Adele was calling at the door:

"Eugene, Eugene, get up quickly if you want to see the grandest storm that ever was! Oh, it's magnificent from mamma's window—hurry!"

"Yes, yes," he answered, "be there in a minute."

"Now I must go and watch it;" and he heard the rapid patter of the little feet he so delighted to watch as they left his door. He thought not of the storm, not of his dreams, not even of his breakfast, but just this: "She has on those rose-colored velvet slippers; no other shoes ever made have just the same sound that hers do." No. Mr. Lagrange, of a truth you are right. It is a fact old as the world. The one pair of feet, the only pair in the world for—somebody.

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Adele was right in her description of the approaching storm. It was solemn and grand; but, after a few brilliant flashes of lightning, a few rolling, jarring peals of thunder, the rain came down in torrents. For a few minutes it seemed like one vast river pouring down, so compact was the sheet of water. Then it thinned, while the streams came steadily and straight. Mrs. Vincent, smiling amongst her guests in the dining room, said she "guessed it was going to make a day of it."

"I'm sorry," said Mrs. Ashleigh to her own party. "I so wanted to finish our little romance to-day where we began it."

"And it will be so dull here all day," sighed Lura, as she drew closer about her her white shawl with a sort of sea-foam fringe of the palest, rain-washed green.

Adele's spirits seemed to rise with every change. All was sweet and good to her. She rubbed her brown hands together, then passed them up and down over the sparkling buttons of her scarlet jacket.

"Now, mamma, and Lura, it will be very nice to stay here all day and see what the people do; won't it, cousin? And by and by I'll put on a waterproof—oh, my German teacher called it a 'watertight cloak'—and my boots, of course," and she set one of the velvet slippers tapping against Eugene's

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boot, "and we'll take a walk—just you and I—mamma and Lura don't like the rain, but I do; we'll go, won't we?"

She passed the tips of her fingers lightly over Eugene's hand as it lay on the table. He nodded assent, watching, in a dreamy way, the pretty creature who flashed and sparkled and dimpled so continually, yet so changefully, seeming always fresh and always new.

"Then we can have reading in mamma's room, can't we?"

"I suppose we can," said Mrs. Ashleigh, "but I'm afraid we shall miss much of the charm of the story."

"I believe, Aunt Ashleigh, that as the story progresses, it will furnish its own charm independent of present surroundings. I will read, by and by, as soon as you are all ready, and we'll have such a nice long morning. I believe Gypsy is right, and we shall pass the day very comfortably."

So it was agreed; but the cheerful philosophers of the party discovered before noon that there are many more unmanageable things in the world than a rainy day. An hour later, when Eugene, throwing away the stump of his cigar, and with his manuscript half unfolded in his hand, tapped at Mrs. Ashleigh's door, he was met by Adele with the most comical expression of dismay on her bright face. She held the door open, saying: "Come in, cousin, I think we are nearly ready to hear you read."

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She glanced at a tall, angular, light-haired, gray skinned woman who sat swaying back and forth in a rocking chair, and talking, talking a steady, monotonous stream, so like the rain outside. Mrs. Ashleigh arose, placed a chair for her kinsman, and introduced him to Mrs. Grant, a boarder in the house, who had taken advantage of this stay-in-doors morning to call upon them. Eugene remembered having seen the woman in the dining room and on the stairs once or twice, but her individuality was as undefined, as if she could just as well be something or somebody else as herself; he thought, when he saw her, of something vague, unfinished and meaningless. But there he was mistaken. She had been finished long ago, and, the truth of it was, she was worn out; but nature has queer fits of economy sometimes, and keeps worn out articles hanging about, thinking she may possibly repair them some day, instead of turning them into her perpetually running machine shop to be worked over into something else. Whenever she had met any of the strangers she had stared at them unwinkingly with her almost colorless eyes, behind their almost imperceptible lashes; but one meets this sort of eyes very much as one does the stare of a plaster head in a milliner's window, or the placid gaze of the wooden Indians of tobacco stores.

When Eugene heard her talking in her low, dreary

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monotone, he felt himself drifting away into nowhere and nothingness. He felt as if he must exert every faculty as much as possible to prevent falling from his chair, or doing something alarmingly stupid under the influence of this swaying mass of stagnation. He wondered if from this woman emanated the peculiar easy-going air that pervaded the village. Did she, living here in the center of the pleasant little town, breathe out the fumes of poppy over one and all? Eugene asked himself these silly things in a semi-conscious state, little suspecting that an hour or two later he would answer himself with all the energy of the Honorable Melville Warner, "Begawd she does!" He thought he had waited three hours for Mrs. Grant to go, really, fifteen minutes, and, making some slight excuse and promising to return in a few minutes, he left the room. He wandered about the house, out on the piazza, then upstairs again past Mrs. Ashleigh's door, but the lead-colored stream was still going on, and he entered his own room, leaving the door ajar. He waited an hour or more, and had become interested in reading when there was a light tap and Lura Ashleigh pushed open the door and came in. Her manner was flurried, and her face wore an expression half of wonder, half alarm. She held out her hands, saying:

"Come with me, Eugene, the strangest thing happened a little while ago, just a few minutes since—

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sister wants you, quick," and she linked her arm into his and hurried him into the corridor. "We were so frightened," she continued, "you don't know—I never saw her sick before, and to see her fade out white and seem to die before our eyes, we were so alarmed!"

"Why, who fainted? Who's sick? The stone woman? or, I think she's made of mortar. What ailed her? and why couldn't she go to her own room to be sick?"

"No, no; it wasn't Mrs. Grant who was sick, it was Adele."

"Adele!"

"Yes; and see how she looks now," as they entered the room and saw Adele, pale and quiet, lying on a couch, her mother beside her holding her hands. She laughed a little, tremulous laugh as she caught sight of Eugene's face with its look of blank amazement. Then she raised herself, and releasing her hands from her mother's, she held them toward him, saying, "Come, Monsieur, my cousin, make me alive again."

He took both her hands in his and sat down beside her. She nestled close, laying her head against his shoulder. He passed one arm around her and held her there while he looked from her pale face to the mother and sister.

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"Oh don't look like that, Eugene," she coaxed, "I shall soon be all alive now. You are alive and warm; but that woman, Mrs. Grant," and she lowered her voice in mock solemnity, "is dead, just as *dead!* Oh, I know, and she talked me nearly to death. I'm not sick; It's nothing in the world but that the woman's dead."

Mrs. Ashleigh laughed nervously. "We were so frightened, Eugene, to see Gypsy's color fade out, and she, turned to a very snow maiden, slip from her chair to our feet. She has never been sick a day in her life."

"But, mamma," exclaimed Adele, "just to sit and watch Mrs. Grant, and hear her talk so lowly, and so slowly; and she's all stone color—hair, eyes, skin and dress. I looked closely; she wore no collar, and I could barely see where her dress ended and her neck was in sight. And her eyes were so lifeless, and her lips were dry and pulled away from her teeth; and, Eugene, if I could have passed my hand down over her eyes and closed them, and then pressed my other hand under her chin, I'm certain she'd have stayed so; but not to dare do that, to be obliged to sit still and hear her talk, and talk, and talk about how sick she was through all that terrible summer, and how she chilled, and had such scorching fevers as nobody ever had before, and how much medicine she swal-

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lowed, till everything tasted one way, like nothing at all; and then everything looked one way, and all noises sounded one way, and she knew she was going insane, and she wondered if anybody else knew it; and she'd watch persons who talked to her to discover if they thought her strange or queer; and she'd listen outside of doors to hear if her friends were talking of sending her to an asylum. Then she told of when the final crash came—the day when she took the typhoid fever. But, cousin, she didn't take the fever, I know. She never could have had life nor resolution enough to have taken anything. She must have been wandering about somewhere ahead of the wind in the fever territory, and just happened to come in the way of a fever, and they paired off together. No, I'm sure she never could take a fever, and a fever with any self-respect wouldn't settle down to feed for weeks on such a bloodless creature."

They all laughed at Adele's fancies, and Eugene touching his cheek to her dark hair said:

"Well, well! I hope this fainting fit is not the advance agent of some highly respectable fever coming to banquet on you. I shall go out to Lake Manitou and let the sea serpent eat me if anything so dreadful should happen."

"No; I'm not going to have a fever. See, I'm well now," and she raised her head from its resting

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place, showing the pink tinge coming into her cheeks and lips. "Besides, I wasn't sick, I was just being dead like Mrs. Grant. By and by, mamma, and Lura would have been the same way; but I felt her influence first, because they talked to her. But, if they had failed to see me, and if nothing else had startled them, they'd have died, too. What a situation! What would the newspapers have said about it? and then, 'New Orleans papers please copy.' And, Eugene, I do believe if you hadn't gone out you'd have died first of all."

Eugene laughed, and made believe to shiver; but, as he recalled how he felt before leaving the presence of Mrs. Grant, a chill went over him that was real enough.

"But how did you feel, Posy? Was the room close, and what did you think? Tell me how it was."

"I don't believe I can make you understand unless you've died sometime, just a going away into nothingness. Mrs. Grant told us how she felt on that last morning; what her husband said at breakfast; how many mince pies she made before dinner; what she thought when she pared the potatoes; described her sensations when arranging the table; told how nearly she dropped a pile of plates that had been brought from Virginia when her people all ran away from the war. Then how she staggered to take the

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beefsteak from her husband's hands and put it on the gridiron that was already on the coals, and that's all I know about it. Whether the steak was properly cooked or not I can not say, as I dropped the thread of her discourse and myself on the floor at that point. But the funniest of it all!" and Adele clapped her hands and laughed till her cheeks were rosy again, and her eyes swam in tears of merriment. "The very funniest part of it all was, when mamma and Lura had showered me with cold water and blistered my nose with ammonia, and I waked up feeling just like a mummy looks, or like Mrs. Grant, I apologized to her for the interruption, and, as true as she's a most remarkable fossil, she went on and finished her story."

Adele's merriment was contagious, and the party grew quite jovial. Mrs. Ashleigh asked:

"But did you notice, dear, what she said of you? She thinks you are very bilious; have a great deal of malaria hanging about you, and ought to take some of her own favorite remedy, quinine."

"No, mamma, I didn't hear her say that; but what an idea! Why should she think me bilious?"

"Because your complexion is so very sallow." And Mrs. Ashleigh drew her face into the most comical web of wrinkles at Adele's open mouth of astonishment.

"Sallow!" That seemed to be the only word she

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could articulate. Her mother, sister and cousin laughed uproarously as she flew to a little mirror and surveyed herself critically.

Lura remarked, "I don't believe its necessary to follow Mrs. Grant's advice about the medicine, but she's certainly not blameable for noticing the state of your complexion, sis; you know you've been very careless ever since we left home; in fact, you've always been careless. Now, when people begin to criticise, maybe you'll wear a veil."

"Indeed I won't wear a veil, not though all the stone women from here to Egypt should walk around after me talking malaria and advising quinine. I'll not wear a veil until I get married or go into a nunnery." And Adele waltzed around the room on her toes until she came to her sister, then throwing herself into Lura's lap and twining her arms about her neck, she declared she had the fairest-faced, sweetest darling of a sister that ever anybody had; and she was so glad, "for you see," she rattled on, "if mamma had but me, or if you had been so perverse as to have been born a boy with all this pink and white beauty, and the lovliest, sunniest light brown, what a trial mamma's one little black girl would have been."

Evidently, Adele had entirely recovered from her indisposition, and hearing the dinner bell, they prepared to descend. Mrs. Ashleigh told her daughters

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that if Mrs. Vincent, or any of the boarders had heard of Adele's fainting fit, and should mention it, to be very careful in answering so as not to offend Mrs. Grant.

"But, mamma, if the folks don't know, why should not they be told of this modern Circe? Who knows; she may call on others about the house and bewitch them before they can help themselves, and here we'll be in the midst of automatic dead people." And Adele confronted her mother with an expression of high resolve, as if she had discovered her mission.

"Hush, Adele, dear," her mother answered as they neared the dining-room door, and she composed her own face for the meeting of strangers.

"I'll tell you, Beauty," said Eugene, as he detained them close by the door, and speaking low and rapidly, "If she bewitches me, and only leaves me the power of motion, I'll take her out for a sail, and"— Eugene went through the pantomime of throwing a person overboard. "I'll see for myself if somebody can not be drowned in the enchanted water."

"Oh, oh!" said Adele, smothering her laughter; "Don't you know she's a stone? and she'd keep going down, and down, and don't you know too, the lake has an enormous leak down below? Why suppose she should pull you down with her, as she'd be sure to do, there is so much 'hang on' about her; I discovered that in the way she hung on this morning, telling about

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the fever—and if you should go down together, I'm afraid the dumb, steered by the dead, would light on the sea serpent."

"Adele! Eugene! hush!" and Mrs. Ashleigh pushed open the door in spite of the two pairs of hindering hands.

The dinner was already in progress, and the guests talked of the rain that still came down in a slow, dismal drizzle.

"Now, cousin," said Lura, "you'll come, directly after dinner and read to us, won't you?"

"Yes, there'll be no going out to-day, but," glancing at Adele, "we don't care for that, we've certainly been well entertained this morning, and"—very softly, "if Gypsy wishes it, we can ask Mrs. Grant to pass the afternoon with us.

Adele covered her face for an instant with her napkin; then removing it, she recited in a tragic stage whisper:

> "Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea,
> The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape
> With fold to fold of mountain or of cape;

"But, O, if that stone woman calls to see us again I'll throw her out of the window and break her all into pieces. *Ask her no more!*" Rising from the table as, she whispered the last words into Eugene's ear, she whisked out of the room and up the stairs, leaning

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over the banisters at the top she called Eugene: "Only one cigar, Monsieur, only one; be here within thirty minutes, I'm so anxious about the fate of those Babes in the Woods."

Within the limits given him, Mr. Lagrange made his appearance in good order, and proceeded with the reading.

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CHAPTER IX.

LIGHTS AND SHADES OF THE FOREST.

THE years in their flight seemed to linger lovingly over the peaceful home by Lake Manitou. The fields grew broader and more fertile, the young fruit trees blossomed in spring as if in overflowing joy at their own beauty, and happiness in existence; they dropped their ripened fruit and russet, flame and crimson leaves in the autumns as one might fancy sentient things bestowing benedictions with their utmost power of good on some loved one. To the family in this humble home, aliens from the land of their nativity, everything about them spoke in a language pure and beautiful.

The grand old trees were to them as friends and companions, each with its own peculiar excellences. The waters of the lake, smiling in fair weather, or convulsed by storms, were still dear and familiar, loved best in each last change. The green turf, with its flitting lights and shadows; the furrowed field, with its fresh odor, or the wide expanse of waving

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green or golden grain, all were like the presence of talking friends. Each had its own manner of speech; its own smiles and tears; its own beauty and loveableness, and, over all, they felt the all-pervading principle of truth and right that continuously rolls its mighty stream through human affairs, fusing all things into one common result, drawing all things into itself, purifying, strengthening, renewing forever.

To the father and mother in the home, the years brought peace, quiet, contentment; happiness in their surroundings in the present, thankfulness for the sweet and bitter of the past, and hope for the future. The seasons that brought blossoms and fruitage, falling leaves and chilling winds about the home they had created and loved so well, brought also outward changes to them. Scattering gray hairs began to appear, gleaming here and there in the dark locks, glitterings of silver, such as are seen on the edges of leaves that catch the lingering rays of the setting sun. But the faces, growing with the passing years more in unison with the inner life, were calmer, sweeter, more truly dignified than in the more ostentatious life in Paris. Virginie would say, in her pretty flattering way, and with soft, caressing touches over her father's or mother's hair:

"You splendid papa," or "your dear little mamma, you are growing handsomer every year. Your por-

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traits there on the wall are very unjust to you. They, with all the advantages of youth and fine costumes, are not flattering to you now in these plain dresses."

And Mr. Perrine would caress his daughter, close her eyes with his fingers, and declare, handsome as he was, he feared strangers might think he had stolen her from fairyland, and never would believe he was really father of anything so charming. Mrs. Perrine, glad that she appeared comely in the eyes of her child, talked to her of the sweetness of living in unity with one's own heart, and at peace with one's surroundings. She taught her beautiful lessons of the underlying good in all things natural, and assured her there would always be some drop of sweetness in the bitterest cup; some palliative for the deepest grievances; that a spirit thus fortified, thus ready to open kindly, believing eyes, would find the darkest hours shot with rays of light; that a spirit thus calm and trusting would reach forth soft hands and smooth away the ravages made by time on its tenement house, the body. She directed her attention to their uncivilized neighbors, the Indian maids and matrons. As infants and children they were equal in dusky charms with their brothers; many of them, of both sexes, possessing faces and forms undeniably beautiful. But, as the girls grew to womanhood and took up the burdens of their way of life, the drudgery of wigwam and field, together with the unkindness of

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words and brutality of blows from the men, their beauty of form and face disappeared in uncouthness; a stupid, sullen expression took the place of happy smiles, and the miserable body was but the reflex of the dwarfed and deformed spirit within. As the one half of the body can not be diseased without the other half sympathizing, so the men of the tribe were degraded by the ill usage of the women. The seamed and wrinkled faces of the warriors were hideous because of the distortion of the natural form to the expression of selfishness and cruelty.

If the father and mother of this family, with their remembrance of shocking sights of poverty, disease, crime, all the ills of a city like Paris, with the lingering taste on their lips of the bitter fruit of knowledge of the world, with their oft-recurring dreams of the past, dreams that would come like ghosts that must forever walk the ways of men, dreams that wakened them, chilled with horror, in the starlit midnights again and again, to be lulled to sleep by the murmuring of the water, the whispering of the forest and the soft sweep of the wind—if they, with such a past, had grown calm and full of peace, and all outward token of fear or trouble had been swept away, why should not their young brood grow in sweetness and beauty, living, as they did, in daily communication with nature, fearing nothing above, below nor about them.

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And so it was. In the quiet and peace of the forest the young lives were rounding to perfection in both body and spirit. Besides the necessary labor, there was ample time for many short excursions into the woods, visiting neighboring Indian villages, fishing in strange waters, and hunting and botanizing through the timber lands and over the wide swampy plains.

Once a year some of the family, sometimes all, went to an eastern or Canadian town for supplies of clothing and food that the farm failed to provide. But the favorite excursion was made in the beautiful, lingering autumn, when the harvests were garnered and all things were ready for winter. It was like a dream of ideal life when the whole family, with Mr. Haines and Constance, and sometimes a half dozen friendly Pottawatomies, with well filled baskets, and hammocks woven of bark, traveled through the woods till they reached the Ouabache, where, taking canoes, they drifted and floated and spun rapidly along in races till they reached the village of Vincennes. Often, on still summer-like days, when the woods were gorgeous with the glory of the dying year, some Indian hunter or some weary Indian woman, out of sight of the river, paused to listen to sounds of singing and laughter that gradually died away down the stream. These trips were looked forward to as the events of the years; not so much to meet people of their own na-

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tionality at Vincennes, though this was a pleasure, as solely for the journey there and back, the leisurely wanderings through the forest, the resting at night in their bark hammocks swung amongst the trees in the midst of glowing camp fires, where they talked and sang and watched the stars till they fell into the deep sleep only known to persons of this way of life. They grew familiar with all the night sounds of river and forest. Through the long, warm days of Indian summer they would float down with the stream, sometimes through avenues of old trees that droped their beautiful leaves upon them as they passed, and sometimes between wide, level, grassy plains that stretched away till lost in the hazy distance.

Such strange and gaudy flowers as the children gathered, when, leaving the canoes, they foraged the wide plains, and joined the party again laden with botanical treasures. It was Acadia, Utopia, anything beautiful and unreal that theorists had dreamed of, and this little group of wanderers from civilization lived. It was freedom in the fullest, sweetest sense. This southward journey, the children called migrating like the birds to summer lands. And how wonderful were many of the birds that frequented the marshy banks of the Ouabache. What tall, awkward looking cranes that stood amongst the reeds and rushes, solemn and motionless. What splendidly plumaged

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ducks swam down the river fearlessly in sight of the travelers till some sportsman of the party, unable to resist the temptation, fired amongst them. What coveys of prairie chickens arose from the plains and flew heavily away. No instant of time was dull or monotonous. There were continually new sights and sounds to be hailed with wonder and delight and then investigated. The forest, plains and streams were full of strange treasures, and the Indians seemed never weary of ministering to the demands of their pleasant white neighbors for explanations. Their forest lore was given most readily, and all their cunning in weaving hammocks and baskets of barks and embroidering moccasins and blankets, they taught the refugees. Nothing could exceed in confidence the pleasant intercourse of these two fragments of nations. After one or two trips to Vincennes, to economize time and words in bidding goodbye to the home, Victor Lagrange set to music a plaintive little song that Mrs. Perrine composed for the sadly joyous occasion. So for years, their last ceremonial before starting southward was to stand on the sloping lawn between the house and the lake and sing their good-bye, while Victor led with his flute.

Many of the Indian children learned it, and their sweet wild voices repeated the words over and over, as their white friends disappeared from their gaze.

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Virginie would say, while her eyes were bright with tears, "I believe everything about us understands what we say," and again she'd sing, very softly :

Oh, woods, and fields, and waters bright,
Oh, drifting clouds, in amber light,
  Though far we roam,
  Our forest home
Is still the dearest spot ;
  Though softer skies
  May greet our eyes,
Dear friends, forget us not !

Oh, beauteous birds from far off lands,
Remember still our laden hands,
  Though leaves shall fall,
  And shrill winds call
About our lonely cot,
  And though each day
  Is cold and gray,
Dear friends, forget us not !

How shall we know ? Our wandering feet
May find no more this loved retreat.
  In foreign lands,
  Our patient hands
May work a grander lot ;
  Yet, still we cry :
  Oh, fair, blue sky,
  Oh, fields and trees,
  And odorous breeze,
Oh, birds, and vines, and tender flowers,
Still keep in mind the hopeful hours,
  Dear friends, forget us not !

As Virginie Perrine grew into womanhood, the natives, in the poetry and romance of their way of life that names things in accordance with their natu-

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ral characteristics, ceased to call her the pale faced maiden, giving her instead the name of "Wild Sunflower." And the "Wild Sunflower" seemed to acsorb color and radiance from all about her that was bright and warm. She basked in the heat of the sun, decorated her heavy, dark hair with the gorgeous, deep-hearted flowers she gathered, and her winter mantle and hood were trimmed with the gay plumage of wild birds. Her dark, splendid beauty was one bond of the strong friendship that had sprung up between her and the son and daughter of Samoset, Gray Wolf and Winona. The girls were about the same age; the young chief was several years older. Often, when Virginie and Winona returned from their long ramblings, flushed and tired, Mrs. Perrine, meeting them at the door, would say: "Virginie, your face is not fairer than Winona's. I believe some ancestor of yours must have been of her blood." And Virginie would throw her arms about her friend and declare it was no distant ancestor that made them kindred, but they were sisters in very truth because of their brown faces and warm hearts. It was owing to this friendship that the Indian girl had adopted many of the ways of civilization, and she often went with the Perrines on their visits to Vincennes and other places. Gradually, the two became constant companions, and Conny Haines and Celie Davenal

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were left to each other. As Virginie developed her brilliant, tropical beauty, Celie became fairer, sweeter, more delicate in form and face, as she grew into womanhood. The pliant, pale-green willow, and the wood violet were types of her loveliness. The brown hair, though sunny and abundant, was soft, clinging and silky, and the brown eyes took on no wine tint, but grew to a grayish tinge, like the waters of the lake at sunset. Healthful and happy she certainly was, but the full, bounding life that coursed in the veins of her foster-sister sometimes frightened her. She, walking on the banks of the lake, or in the forest paths, always reached a clinging hand for companionship or protection. In the house she nestled close beside some one, sliding her slender hand into the clasp of one warmer and stronger.

Conny Haines and Celie were the best of friends, and Gustave Perrine never tired of the gentle, affectionate creature. Gustave was not so restlessly vigorous as his sister, yet he was strong and manly, and, as old Pauline declared, "a son that any father might be proud of." When the young people went out together, Gustave and Celie usually went hand-in-hand, or he would take her in his arms to cross some marshy place where the others sprang lightly from one stepping-stone to another.

When Virginie, Gray Wolf and Winona awoke

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the echoes of the forest with some wild song of battle and victory, Celie would stand in silence clinging to Conny or Gustave, the faint tinge of pink deepening and fading in her cheeks. In return, she and Conny would warble some tender ballad of France or England. Virginie never could tell exactly how it was, by what or how many hints she at last gained the understanding that Winona had set her heart upon a marriage between herself and Gray Wolf. She would not by any means wound the pride of Winona by the least expression of her own views on the subject, but in the family it was a never-ending theme of merriment. At the same time, Mr. and Mrs. Perrine watched the young chieftain narrowly, to see if he shared his sister's infatuation. And this was what they discovered, though Winona was blind to the fact, and all the happy young people were clearly unconscious of it. Gray Wolf saw no charms in the dusky beauty of Virginie, but speaking or silent, busy or idle, his keen eyes followed every movement of the fair, pretty Celie. It was only in speaking to her that his voice was low, gentle and caressing. To her he brought clusters of delicate violets and the palest of pink buds. The shimmering silver gray furs that he won in the chase were laid at her feet. Celie accepted all his gifts and his many kindly attentions sweetly, timidly, as she did from any one else, never dreaming of what it all meant.

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CHAPTER X.

ANNIVERSARY DEVELOPMENTS.

SEVEN years, with all their beautiful changes, had passed, and now it was flowery June. Mr. and Mrs. Perrine resolved to celebrate the seventh anniversary of the arrival of the mother and children at the lake by an outdoor dinner, to which should be invited their Indian friends. Mr. Haines and Conny were so entirely a part of themselves that no ceremony was used with them. They assisted daily, in all arrangements for pleasure or profit in which the Perrines interested themselves. So the preparations for the gala day went briskly forward. Temporary long tables were built in the shade, long boughs of young trees were interlaced so as to form arbors and leafy seats; and the woods were ransacked for flowers to mingle with those already in bloom in the garden and about the house. All was in a pleasant hurry and bustle and confusion, and not a few the anxious glances directed to the skies on the evening before the great day, to discover signs of fair weather for the

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fete. But when the sun arose that morning, and the day had fairly begun, Virginie declared it was a "day made on purpose, after a new pattern, and no day before it had ever been half so lovely." So the company assembled, decked in their choicest raiment and brightest smiles. All things visible denoted peace, happiness and prosperity, and several hours passed before arose the shadow of coming evil. Victor and Gustave had placed fine wires here and there from tree to tree, as they said so grand a time with no music but that of a flute would seem beggarly, so they had Æolian harps in abundance.

Great was the surprise of the Pottawatomies to hear all about them the fitful, sighing music. At first the wonder on their dark faces was mixed with alarm; but the young men assured them that this was only one of the pleasures of the day, and their confidence was restored. Yet, they talked amongst themselves of the love that Manitou had for the white men, and declared he had shown his regard by sending invisible sweet singers to grace their feast. Victor, unwilling to deceive them, led parties to see the tightly drawn wires, and explained the simple works that produced such pleasing sounds. Still they shook their heads, and talked of the voice of Manitou on the wind blessing them; and Samoset said gravely, in his own language:

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"See how kind is Manitou to these strangers. The winds that chill us and blow down our corn, sings sweetly at their bidding. The great trees that fall, crushing our wigwams, our wives and children, these white men cut as they will and build into houses to shelter themselves and even their flocks and herds. The lake that our canoes never touched, bears them safely upon its bosom, while they strew flowers in the water, and sing songs in his praise. Manitou loves the white men."

The old man, standing on the bank of the lake, in the warm glow of the June sunshine, stretching forth his brawny arm as he delivered this eulogy, was truly picturesque. He sought Mr. Perrine, and led him apart to one of the arbors, where they remained for some time. Mrs. Perrine noticed that when her husband came and joined again in the festivities, he was thoughtful and troubled. He glanced about uneasily, and asked, in a fretful, hurried way, "where's Celie?"

"There," Mrs. Perrine answered, pointing to a merry group at the foot of a great oak, engaged in some queer little game with blades of grass and acorn cups. Celie was leaning against Winona, and laughing gleefully at something that had happened an Indian lad. Just on the edge of the group was Gray Wolf; not joining in the game, but reclining on the grass, and gazing intently at Celie. Mr. Perrine frowned heavily and a fierce word or two escaped him.

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"What is it, my friend?" asked his wife.

"Nothing, dear; nothing, I hope. I'll explain to-morrow—not now. All fancy, I hope."

So the feast was spread on the long tables, such a feast as these wilds had never seen before. All the stores of silver, crystal and china, much that had not seen the light since leaving Paris—were carried out to make a grand show. Then such cookery, too! Such huge turkeys and such tender prairie chickens, all the exact shade of rich brown to throw an epicure into spasms of delight. The young pigs, too, and the pastry that Pauline was so proud of. The fruit puddings and the game pies, made of flour brought so many miles through the forest, Pauline declared it had the scent of leaves and buds. When the company had gathered about the tables Mr. Perrine asked Samoset if he would invoke a blessing from Manitou on their food. The old man arose from his seat. The assembled people lowered their heads. Their chief looked toward their background of field and forest, then out over the lake, then turned his face toward the sky, and, with hands outspread, in a few solemn words he expressed the dependence of all the earth on the Great Spirit; acknowledged the many blessings of those about him, and implored a continuance of his mercies. Then all was merry chatter while the white host and his family waited upon their numerous

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guests, who found themselves rather awkward with the elegant table service. The old men and women lingered long at their dinner, and afterward sat about quietly, some of them smoking, and watching the young ones, who joined in an impromptu dance on the turf, to the music of Victor's flute. Gray Wolf and his sister had learned the waltz long before, and now Virginie, looking the very spirit of the festival, whirled round and round with the young chief, barely touching his hand and shoulder. Mr. Perrine smiled and said to his wife:

"What a sprite our darling is. She scarcely touches either her partner or the ground."

As he spoke Virginie left Gray Wolf with a rapid pirouette, and seizing by the hands a little Indian girl, whirled away with her, the child laughing and shouting, half frightened at the unexpected taking up. Gray Wolf approached Celie and offered his hand. The girl, with a quick, shy glance at his face, took her position beside him. He half carried her through the dance, and Mr. Perrine, watching him, started from his seat. But Samoset was watching, too. He put his hand on the arm of his host, muttering: "Let him alone." Mr. Perrine sat down again, but the frown in his eyes deepened as he saw the looks of keen enjoyment in the face of the young Indian, and the air of ownership that came all about him as he

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waltzed with Celie in his arms. But the day could not last forever. So thought Gray Wolf, as he gazed with burning eyes on the flower-like face so near his own; and so thought Mr. Perrine, and he sighed with satisfaction.

The setting sun threw his golden light in long lances through the aisles of the forest, along the smooth turf, over the planted fields, and across the still surface of the lake. The birds twittered overhead, and, with much fluttering of wings and stirring of leaves, settled into their nests. The deep colors died out of the sky, leaving cool gray shadows that came softly like a curtain over the earth. The stars came out, and the full moon, like a wheel of fire, rose above the horizon. The day was done, and the revelers dispersed.

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CHAPTER XI.

THE SHADOW MATERIALIZES.

NEXT morning, in the hurry and confusion of putting things to rights, Mrs. Perrine forgot her husband's strange behavior on the previous day, as well as his promised explanation. Celie Davenal soon did all that was expected of her in and about the house, and taking her sketch book, she said she would go to the field where Gustave was at work, as the bit she wished to sketch was in the very state of summer freshness she wished it. Virginie came out on the lawn with a basket of crumbs, remains of the festival, and scattered them on the turf for the birds, as she walked leisurely down the slope. Her father and Victor Lagrange were standing near the margin of the lake, busily engaged in cleaning and polishing a couple of guns, whose long barrels flashed in the sunlight as they turned them. Virginie came down to them, scattering her crumbs, and followed by her flock of pigeons that she petted, or scolded, as their conduct

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merited. Mrs. Perrine came to the door, then seeing the little group by the lake, she joined them. Her husband looked at her smilingly, with some half-articulated words, and was answered in kind. The pair so fully understood each other, were so truly wedded, it often seemed as if speech was unnecessary between them. Then a sudden thought, not entirely pleasant, struck Mr. Perrine. His face was darkened as by a passing shadow, though he laughed lightly as he rested his gun on his foot and spoke to his wife, while with a motion of his hand he drew the attention of Virginie from the midst of her birds.

"So it seems that Mr. Wolf, whose baptismal name is Gray, is not smitten with the charms of our Lady Bountiful, after all."

"Indeed!" remarked Victor, and paused in his work. "I supposed it was all arranged between them, and we might have a wedding at almost any time."

"Oh, how ridiculous!" said Virginie, as she petted a white bird that perched on her shoulder, and helped itself from the basket. "I told you all the time we were the best of friends, and now has he told you the same thing? I love Winona, and always shall."

"That's right, Lady Bountiful," said Lagrange, with a fine affectation of sympathy, "keep your courage up—never let the rascal see he has broken your heart. If you must wear the willow, cover it with roses, or

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clover blossoms, or your own name flower." And the tutor laughed heartily, as Virginie threw first, crumbs, then basket, and lastly, birds at him.

Mr. Perrine, falling in with the humor of the young man, said: "I thought, too, it was all arranged, or might be very easily, and Virginie would soon be settled for life with her heart's choice. No flurry about a wedding outfit, no bother and expense for bridal tour, no separation—nothing disagreeable—just a little ceremony by a Vincennes priest to please the bride, and the Pottawatomie ritual to satisfy the groom. Then a wigwam, or cabin here, close by us—"

"Oh, papa! for shame!" cried Virginie, from amongst her birds that flew about her, pecking at her hands and hair.

"Well, you see, my child, I suppose you expect to marry sometime, and a husband suitable for such a western breeze as you are is not found every day. You have lived here in the woods so long, an entirely civilized man might hesitate."

"That's true, papa," she interposed, "and since you seem to understand so well that the chief of the Pottawatomies will have none of me, I think my best way out of the dilemma will be to marry Monsieur Lagrange. He has grown as wild as I, and—dear me! these birds are devouring me, I must get more crumbs."

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She passed Victor and picked up her basket from amongst the tall grass where it had fallen. At her careless remark, her parents glanced quickly from her to Victor, who started violently and let his gun fall from his hands to the ground. The mother eagerly scanned the young man's face, and, with unerring instinct, read there the love of the man, and the hopelessness of the subordinate. Extending her hand to him, she turned to her husband, saying so softly that Virginie, stooping over the rustling grass, heard not a word, "Just as our darling says, let it be," and Mr. Perrine kissed her eyes one after the other, and answered:

"You are right, you always are. But," turning to Victor who had eagerly clasped the hand of Mrs. Perrine, "not a word now, she's nothing but a child—wait awhile."

The young man pressed his hand. His lips were silent, but his eyes expressed more than words could have done, as he watched, Virginie with her recovered basket, singing, laughing, and almost as airy as her feathered companions, ascend the sloping lawn to the house.

"And now wife, and Victor," said Mr. Perrine, "I must tell you of something that Samoset said to me yesterday that troubles me. I hope there is no cause for fear; we have lived so long and peacefully with

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these wild people, I can not endure the idea of a rupture in our friendship. Neither do I like to think, for a moment, that they would become spiteful or treacherous."

"But what is it, dear?" asked Mrs. Perrine. "You alarm me," and she placed her hand within his arm.

"I thought yesterday, after the affair about the wires, there was a change in our social atmosphere," said Victor, "but I could in no way account for it."

"It is just this." Mr. Perrine spoke in a low tone, and his two companions drew closer to him. "You both know of Winona's fancy for a marriage between Gray Wolf and Virginie, and you both have noticed—at least you have, Elise—the young chief's manner toward Celie. It seems Samoset has not been blind to his son's preference for the White Star, as they call her. Yesterday, being particularly struck by what he was pleased to term the kindness of the Great Spirit to the whites, and perhaps feeling covetous of the many favors he thinks we receive above his own people, he explained to me that in order to obtain his own proper share of the blessings of Manitou, a recognition, such as the whites enjoy, if he were civilized he would call it equal dividends, he wished to marry Gray Wolf to Celie; she being so fair and pure, so unlike his own people, prosperity must follow her in degree according with her sweet face and gentle demeanor."

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"Oh, my dear! What did you say?" asked Mrs. Perrine. "It would frighten Celie to death to even know they think of such a thing."

"Certainly it will frighten her, but I don't see how we can prevent her knowing it. She will be assured that we can never permit anything so monstrous to happen her. But I felt that I must concede a little to Samoset's demand. I told him that we never forced our young daughters to marry men whom they disliked, at least, we who enjoyed the greatest favor of our Manitou never did; and, if Celie were willing to marry Gray Wolf, she should do so. I told him, too, of my compact with her dying father, that if it proved for the happiness of both, when of proper age, she should be the wife of my own son. At this, the old man looked very black and savage, but I assured him that neither one of the young people knew anything about this betrothal, and were not, in the least, bound by it. If they failed to love and prefer each other, each should remain single, or marry otherwise; and Gray Wolf had my consent at any time to ask Celie to be his wife."

"Oh, my dear! let us send the child away. She and Conny are like sisters—let Mr. Haines take them to Boston, any where before this matter goes any further." And Mrs. Perrine wrung her hands wildly.

"No; I'm afraid attempting to send her away;

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might make trouble for us all, and, in that case, matters would be worse for her. I think Gray Wolf will try his fate before long, and, of course, only to find himself in the minority. He has picked up many ideas from associating with us, and, I think, he will submit gracefully to the inevitable. If not, if he prove inconsolable, probably we can wait for our autumn flitting, and then remain away. I believe a more southerly climate would be better for Gustave. We can try it at least, if Gray Wolf and his father attempt making things unpleasant for us here."

"Probably," said Victor, "it will be as well to say nothing of our intentions to the Indians; that is, if anything unpleasant grows out of this affair, and if we find it necessary to remain at Vincennes all winter. In the spring some of us can come back as scouts. If all is safe, we can return and keep on as usual; if not—"

"Yes," interrupted Mrs. Perrine, "that will be best, I think. If we can only get through the summer peacefully—and I can not so soon lose all confidence in our neighbors—it may all clear away. How I wish it would! How sad it will be to leave it all," and she looked out over the sunlit water, the waving trees, the cultivated fields, and the low, vine-covered house in the midst, with tears in her eyes. But it seemed to her something of dread and fear had come

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between her and her wild home, rendering it strange and unsafe. The treasures she had sought in the wilderness—liberty and peace—seemed slipping from her grasp. She must gather her dear ones about her, protect them as she could, and turn fugitive again. Mr. Perrine and Victor had resumed the work of polishing their guns, and Mr. Perrine said:

"I really don't believe we shall have any serious trouble; we must be watchful of Celie, though I don't think Gray Wolf will attempt force. However, all we can do, is to await developments and—"

"Look! Look!" exclaimed Mrs. Perrine, pointing towards the fields, and starting rapidly in that direction. Mr. Perrine and Victor looking after her, saw Celie running, bareheaded and with outstretched arms, toward the house. They quickly followed Mrs. Perrine, overtaking her as she received the flying girl, breathless, pale and fainting, in her arms. Victor took her from Mrs. Perrine and carried her into the house. Not a word was spoken; but between the three, looks of alarm were exchanged. Celie lay for sometime unconscious. All restoratives seemed powerless, and the family feared she was indeed dead. At last came a faint, fluttering breath, the veined lids lifted from the scared eyes, and she started up from the couch with a cry of terror. Then, seeing the kindly faces all about her, she clung to Mrs. Perrine, crying and sobbing:

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"Oh, keep him away—don't let him come—I'm so afraid!"

"What is it, darling? who has frightened you?" asked Mrs. Perrine, caressing the trembling girl. Celie lifted her white face from Mrs. Perrine's bosom, and, seeing Victor standing near, she said:

"Do look out and see if he is following. Please don't let him come in;" and in answer to the reiterated question, "Who has frightened you?" from Mr. Perrine and Virginie, she whispered, "Gray Wolf."

"There, darling, there," soothed Mrs. Perrine, drawing the girl closer and smoothing her long light hair. "Victor will stand near the door and prevent the coming of any one who would hurt or alarm you."

"But," said Mr. Perrine, "tell us about it. Didn't you find Gustave?"

"Yes, I found him, and he stayed by me a little while. Then I was busily sketching the great beech tree and the old stump close by it, and a corner of the young wheat, and Gustave had gone to his work a little way off, and then he—Gray Wolf—came. First thing, he pointed to Gustave and asked me if I was going to marry him. I told him I had never thought of it, but probably would some day, if Gustave wished it; that he was so good and kind to me, and you all were, and I never could go and live with any-

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body else, and nobody else ever would love me as you all do."

Mrs. Perrine kissed the pale cheek of the loving child, and Mr. Perrine bent his forehead down over the little pale hands he had clasped in his own, and asked:

"And what did Gray Wolf say? What did he do?"

"Oh, he looked very angry. He tore into fragments the blossoms he had brought for me, and he said that you, dear papa, had told his father that I should marry him, Gray Wolf."

"Oh, my child! you could not believe that?"

"No, papa; but he was so furious I couldn't tell him so. Then he told me how kind his tribe had been to us in letting us live here by the lake, and how they had taught us so many things. I didn't tell him, because it would have been so ungenerous that we, and particularly you and mamma, and Monsieur Lagrange, had taught them many things, too. I was so frightened, and I thought if I kept silent he wouldn't get so angry, and, oh, I can not tell you the dreadful things he said about Manitou and all, but he got fiercer as he talked, and shook his hand at Gustave, and said I must be his squaw, and live in his wigwam; and he came close to me, and I thought he was going to carry me away; and I was afraid if I called

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Gustave he might be killed; so I sprang from the stump, where I had been sitting, and ran and ran, and, oh, I thought he was behind me, and I should never see any of you again," and the little white face grew paler at the recollection. Pauline held a glass of cordial, made of fruits she had cultivated, to Celie's lips; and as the faithful old servant and friend stooped down to present it, a tear rolled from her withered brown cheek into the glass, splashing the liquid into Celie's face. She looked up and laughed at the old woman, then took the glass and drank, saying, "so precious a thing as a tear from dear Pauline should not be wasted."

Footsteps were heard outside and Celie nestled down, hiding her face. Mr. Perrine started up, and Virginie left the side of the couch to follow him, grasping, as she did so, an old rusty carbine brought to light in the overturning of the household stores in the preparations for the festival. Mrs. Perrine, in spite of her alarm, laughed as she saw the warlike action of her daughter; but Victor stood aside and admitted Gustave. He was almost as pale as Celie. He pushed past his teacher, father and sister, and to their eager looks and words, he had no answer till he dropped into a chair beside his mother and Celie. Then his answers were only breathless questionings.

"Is Celie hurt? is she frightened to death? Why did you not come to me, little one, or call me?"

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"Oh, Gustave, I was afraid he'd kill you."

"Kill me! the villainous copper-skin! I have a good will to kill him!"

"Oh, my son, my son!" said Mrs. Perrine, "have you had serious trouble with him?"

"Well, no, I think its the other way. He's had trouble with me. I saw him talking to Celie, but that's common enough. I have known lately, that he admired her excessively, which is not surprising, either; but I hadn't the remotest notion that he would attempt to appropriate her to himself, by violence at least. When he found her this morning, I had gone to my work at a little distance, and I was rather pleased that she had a protector near, in case a snake, or a toad, or a blue bottle fly should make its appearance. By and by I thought, from the young nobleman's gestures, there must be something unusual in the interview, and had just dropped my hoe to go to them, when Celie sprang from her seat and ran. I think probably I broke down some few corn stalks that stood between me and Mr. Wolf, for I believe if I hadn't reached him and diverted his attention, he would have carried her away. But I caught him by the shoulder, and made him right about, in quadruple time. I tell you he looked savage enough, and at first was not all inclined to listen to reason; but though he boasts so much of his strength of arm, I think he found something to match it this morning."

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"I don't know, Gus, what else you could have done, under the circumstances," said Mr. Perrine, "but I regret very much that you had this encounter with him. I fear this will not be the end of it."

"It may not be; but still, Gray Wolf is the aggressor. What would have become of Celie if I, or somebody else, had not been there?"

"True, as I said, you did what was to be done; but why must the savage fool fall in love with Celie?"

"I don't see that he's to be particularly blamed for that," Gustave remarked, dryly.

His father gave him a side long glance, but the boy looked steadily at the floor. Mr. Perrine and his wife exchanged significant smiles, and Celie covered her face with her hands.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE WILD SUNFLOWER STILL BLOOMS.

"Now, why in the name of all that's reasonable, must difficulties arise as soon as young people take a fancy to fall in love with each other?" asked Eugene, pausing in his reading.

"In this case," said Mrs. Ashleigh, "I think the cause of the difficulty is plain enough. I feel quite as much indignation as did Mr. Perrine, at the idea of the Indian fellow falling in love with a creature like Celie Davenal."

"But, don't you see, it was according to the approved law of opposites? He was invulnerable where the charming Virginie was concerned, because she was much like himself. Seems to me the unnatural phase is where Celie Davenal failed to reciprocate his passion."

"I shall never do that way," Adele said, quite seriously. She was leaning in the open window, watching the dispersing clouds. The rain had ceased, and in the west bright streaks of blue were seen.

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"No doubt," said her mother, "you will do something entirely original, dear, when you fall in love."

"I know I shall never love anybody entirely my opposite, at least. Try to think what he would be. Pale, faded out entirely, weak-eyed, a little deaf, a stoop in his shoulders, and if not consumptive, at least dyspeptic, with a hereditary leaning toward insanity. He'd be afraid of a draught, unable to bear the light of the sun—ugh! think of it! And he'd be a divinity student. Ha, ha! my opposite! No, I'll never fall in love with my opposite. I've half a mind now," she went on, reflectively, "to fall in love with Cousin Eugene."

"Now do, Gypsy, do!" said Eugene, throwing down the manuscript and wrapping the girl's long braids round her head like a coronet.

"Adele," said Mrs. Ashleigh, with much dignity, "I'm afraid you are too old to make such expressions. What is very well in a child, may be highly improper in a young lady."

"Yes, mamma, but isn't it proper for a young lady to fall in love?"

"Certainly, my dear, but there is impropriety in speaking of such things carelessly.

"I'm not careless at all. I am very much in earnest. I think Cousin Eugene the very nicest man I ever saw; and I know of no reason why he

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shouldn't know I think so. Besides, I'm not a young lady yet."

"But when you are, I shall remind you of your present sentiments, and insist on a continuance of them." Eugene said this in a light, laughing way, but Mrs. Ashleigh looked very grave. She was sure there was an unusual flush on the handsome dark face of her kinsman, and an undercurrent of seriousness in his voice and manner.

"You shall not insist in vain, Monsieur my cousin, excepting you go and get small pox, or chills, or turn to stone, and walk about stone dead like Mrs. Grant. 'I love not faded cheek, nor hollow eye'—but I'll not anticipate anything disagreeable." She looked off into the west, warbling softly, as if to herself, for the sake of the pretty sentiment.

> "Oh, the heart that once truly loves never forgets,
> But as truly loves on to the close,
> As the sunflower turns to her god when he sets,
> The same look that she turned when he rose."

"By the way, Aunt Ashleigh, doesn't it strike you that the description of Virginie Perrine is very much like our own wild girl here?"

"Very much. At least, so it seems to me; but we must remember that this story was written by the man who loved and married Virginie, and he was no doubt blind, as lovers usually are. We, too, no doubt, are blind to many faults in Adele."

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"My dear, conscientious mother! If you are blind to my faults, I hope you may never gain your sight, or I shall be harrassed out of this beautiful life. Why, how often, each day do you say: 'Adele, dear, put on your hat;' or, 'Daughter, wear your gloves;' and, 'There now, try to walk; you're too tall to run gracefully;' 'don't pet dogs and babies in the street,' and only a few minutes since, I was sternly reproved for falling in love; as if I could help it." And Adele stood looking from one to the other of her laughing relatives, the embodiment of persecuted innocence.

"I don't believe you can help very much anything that comes into your head to say or do. You have no more thought than a tree, or anything living, yet incapable of reasoning. Now, really, dear, do you think you have?" Mrs. Ashleigh asked.

"Probably I haven't," Adele answered quite seriously. "But, mamma, trees and flowers, and everything that grows wild, are just as nature meant them to be; there are no failures in nature where there is a fair field; and there is no unfairness, no pruning, and hewing, and lopping, and killing amongst trees and rocks and all the grand beautiful things of nature till men do it. But if they must do that way because of civilization why can't they make all the amends in their power by keeping their hearts pure and their

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souls honest and strong as nature means them to be when she sends them here innocent babies. I don't want to think so much how every word will sound before I say it. I mean what I say, and papa was right when he said, 'As long as men and women dwarf their souls, or allow them to grow strong in intrigue, cruelty and oppression, civilization is a curse instead of a blessing.' I found that in an unfinished letter of his, in his writing desk at home, and I kept it, because it's true. Papa was always right, and always true to himself, as I mean to be to myself."

"So you shall be, darling. I know you never mean anything wrong, and I wish you to only so far observe the conventionalities of life as to avoid the unkindly criticism of those who do not understand and love you. The world is sometimes very uncharitable and obtuse."

Mrs. Ashleigh kissed her wayward daughter, and touched lovingly the rings of her dark hair that clustered about her glowing face.

"But, mamma," persisted Adele, "strangers are always kind to me."

"That's true, as far as my observation goes," said Eugene. "I think, Aunt Ashleigh, this is a very responsive world. We receive as we give; and I think I've noticed so many people follow Gypsy with pleasant smiles on their faces, and, if we knew it, there

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were kindly wishes in their hearts, because of the brightness she diffuses. I shall henceforth organize myself into a committee of one—constitute myself your never-tiring advocate, little cousin, and plead with Auntie and Cousin Lura to allow you your own sweet will. You shall be the joyous, true-hearted wild sunflower that nature meant you to be."

"Thank you, Cousin Eugene; I know you will prove invincible. It is such a torture to feel as if a straight jacket was being pulled over me, or a stone wall built up about me. It is killing; and even when I am dead I think I shall be conscious of any outrage of nature. I don't want to be embalmed or frozen, or put into a vault, but I want to go to dust, and come into my new life through the grass and clover and trees as soon as possible."

"Please don't talk of such dismal things, sister," said Lura, with a shiver. "'Sufficient for the day,' you know, and to-day has been full and running over with evils. It has rained, and I'm chilled through. Mrs. Grant came and talked you nearly to death. We've just found out that those ancestors of ours had a world of trouble with the savages, and"—

"And there's the tea bell," interrupted Adele, "and see how beautifully the clouds have cleared away, and do look at these delightfully yellow streets. This must be the veritable Eldorado that so many

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people have searched for. The water is all running down to the little creek—see those happy boys wading. Does the water run south from here?"

"Yes," said Eugene. "The little creek empties into the Tippecanoe river, that into the Wabash, and the Wabash into the Ohio. You remember after leaving the Mississippi we traveled on the Ohio to Louisville."

"Isn't it delightful to think these little rivulets will keep on and on till they go by the dear old place at Baton Rouge?"

Adele leaned out at the window and kissed her fingers to the wet street.

"Oh, my dear!" exclaimed Eugene in mock consternation, "that fellow across the street, there by the old church, thinks that is meant for him. Come away quick, or he'll answer you; and there's his wife, and she looks horribly jealous." He drew her back from the window, while she screamed with laughter.

"Come, let us get some tea, I'm freezing," said Lura. After tea, Mrs. Ashleigh lingered for a few minutes in the parlor, talking to Mrs. Vincent, who was suffering with sore throat.

"Damp weather always affects me this way," she remarked, and her usually cheery tone had quite a nasal twang.

Mrs. Grant came in, moving slowly and looking

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blankly about; but on hearing Mrs. Vincent speak, she recommended quinine. "I always take it for a cold; and you've got some malarial trouble, too."

Mrs. Ashleigh said: "I think from the sound of your voice, your tonsils must be affected."

"That's just what I've thought, all along," said Mrs. Grant; "I just knowed she had tonsils in her throat, and there's nothing better than quinine."

Mrs. Ashleigh smiled. Adele giggled, and looked out of the window, calling her sister to see something very amusing in the costume of a lady who sauntered on the other side of the street. Mrs. Vincent glanced slyly from Mrs. Grant to Mrs. Ashleigh, and catching the smile of the latter, she was seized with a violent fit of coughing, and left the room with her handkerchief to her face. After watching out of sight the lady in a blue hat with pink and yellow flowers, a red and white shawl, green silk dress and lemon colored gloves, Lura turned to Mrs. Grant and asked:

"Doesn't the water sink away quite rapidly after a rain?"

"Yes, it goes out of sight, but leaves the ground damp on the top, just fit to breed chills. There's so much malaria about here, I'd advise you all to take quinine in time, if you want to keep shut of the ague."

"Oh, I don't believe we shall have chills," Lura answered, good-naturedly. "Seems to me the people

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here look well, and as we're not really accustomed to any particular section of the country, there seems to be no trouble in becoming acclimated, or probably we never stay in one place long enough to go through with that process, so escape the prevailing ills of all places. I was wondering if we might venture to spend to-morrow at the lake."

"I wouldn't think it safe to go to the lake right after a rain, of all times; but lots of people do go, rain or shine."

Next morning the sun was shining and everything looked fresh and new. The persons passing up and down the streets, exchanged pleasant greetings and remarks of the good the rain had done. The party of tourists, in spite of Mrs. Grant's advice, started for the lake in high spirits. They found that pretentious little pond dimpling and smiling on its surrounding green banks and trees in a way to put out of mind all thought of human sorrow.

"How sad it is," said Mrs. Ashleigh, "viewed from one point, and how ridiculous from another, the superstition that shut out the Indians from the enjoyment and comfort this lake might have given them. Will coming generations so pity us, I wonder?"

"I don't believe they will," Eugene answered. "We find no ideas of superstition in the annals of our ancestors of a hundred years ago; and their natural

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religion was not new to them, or they would have talked it, instead of living it, as they seem to have done. Even the notions of caste and noble birth could have had no weight with them, since Virginie Perrine certainly married her teacher, the son of her father's former business man. I think superstitions are, in a great measure, an inheritance, the same as bodily characteristics; and humanity is gradually turning its back on moth-eaten dogmas and dead gods. Its faith is in itself. I am more glad than I can express that I am a descendant of a long line of free-thinking investigators."

"So am I glad," said Adele, bringing her hands together heartily. "I'm glad for you, and glad for myself, and all of us. If the monster that used to live in this lake should show itself to this generation, I know somebody would find a way to give it a dose of chloroform, then capture it and save it alive. Ha! ha! ha! What a whole menagerie it would make by itself; and what a fortune for the United States! Wouldn't it be grand! Pay off the national debt like buying pins and shoe laces. Dear me! I rather wish it would come to the surface now that all the arrangements are made."

"Ah, but you don't know," said Eugene. "I forgot to tell you what Senator Warner told me. He has actually seen the monster, and it's tremendous!" and

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Eugene told them, with many interruptions, the story he had heard in the reading room.

"I wish more than ever it would come up, and roar just once," said Adele. "I do, indeed." The words were scarcely spoken before a sharp screech came from amongst the trees, and Adele, springing to her feet, grasped Eugene's arm. "What is it? Oh, what is it? and where is it?" she gasped, pale with surprise and terror; and it did seem to her the strangest of all things that her mother, sister and cousin should all laugh immoderately, without saying a word. After what seemed to Adele an interminably long time, Lura directed her attention to a long train of freight cars at a little distance, moving slowly and heavily northward.

"We shall see no monster more terrible or more powerful, nor one that will assist more in the disbursement of the national debt than that one," said Lura. "Now let us have the reading. There is to be trouble, I know. Nobody ever takes the pains to tell a story excepting there is something in it to break one's heart."

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CHAPTER XIII.

"LIKE SWEET BELLS JANGLED, OUT OF TUNE."

MORE than an hour was passed in wondering what would be Gray Wolf's next movement, and then Mr. Perrine unable longer to endure inaction, started out, making his way toward the Pottawatomie village. When he came within sight of the cluster of wigwams, he saw Gray Wolf, in company with his father and Naoman, the medicine man, standing in an open space, a few yards from the last of the dwellings. The two old men were listening while Gray Wolf talked very earnestly. Samoset saw Mr. Perrine approaching, and with a grunt and a motion of his hand he interrupted his son, who, darting one sullen look at the visitor, stalked away. Mr. Perrine joined the two old men, who received him in silence. He asked Samoset if his son had told him of the happenings of the morning. The answer was an inarticulate sound and a gloomy look. Mr. Perrine expressed his regret that anything so unhappy should have taken place; reminded the chief of their conversation on

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the previous day, and of what he had told him about allowing his adopted daughter to make her own choice, which she had done. "And now," he added, "let Gray Wolf prove himself the brave man he pretends to be; let him take for his wife the tall daughter of some neighboring chief; some one more fit for his way of of life, more worthy to be the mother of the future ruler of the Pottawatomies than little, fearful White Star. She must go away where there are houses and streets and many people. The wind moaning amongst the trees makes her shiver with fright. The waves, rising on Lake Manitou turn her cheek white. She's no wife for a warrior like Gray Wolf."

"Ugh!" grunted Samoset. "How wise is the pale face! How generous he is! White Star not strong and brave for young chief's squaw, but she's good and sweet for white boy's wife." He shook his head slowly and went on: "Let him have her; let her marry the white lover; he will need her care. The great Manitou speaks to his children with words the pale face never understands. The skies show the face of the giver of life in smiles or frowns. The forest holds his footsteps that the red man reads as the white man reads his book. Let it be as you will. White Star will not shine in the wigwam of the red man, but dark clouds may cover the White Star forever."

He ceased speaking, and without waiting for a

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reply, he and Naoman turned away, showing by their manner that they wished the conference ended.

Mr. Perrine walked homeward in sore perplexity. That the Indians meant mischief, he was certain; but what their plan of action might be, he could not even guess, so could use no precautions. He determined to be vigilant, but Samoset's allusion to the knowledge of the red men of things in sky and forest of which the whites knew nothing, meant treachery. His threat against Celie might be guarded against by sending her away, and yet an attempt to do that might only hasten the mischief. Even their yearly trip to Vincennes must not be ventured on sooner than usual. Mr. Perrine felt that peace and happiness was at an end until some place of safety was gained, far away from this pleasant little nook in the woods. He entered his house in a sad and thoughtful mood. He told the family of his interview with Samoset, and charged them all, if they chanced to meet any of the tribe, to treat them as cordially as possible, but to be very watchful. Virginie he wished to be friendly as usual with Winona if she came about the house, but as the girl had a boundless love for her brother, it would be but prudent to watch her too.

Virginie shed some stormy tears at the idea of a breaking up of this friendship, and while she promised caution, she protested it was a shame, and worse

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than highway robbery, to suspect Winona of treachery. Though loving her brother, and no doubt desiring his happiness, the Indian maid had more than once expressed a half contemptuous pity for timid, helpless little Celie, and Virginie knew she would do nothing to further Gray Wolf's desired alliance.

Two or three days passed quietly. Celie kept closely within doors, or went but short distances from the house, in company with some one of the family. She understood, in a vague, childish way, that Gray Wolf might vent his jealous spite on Gustave, so she never followed him to the fields or woods, and avoided his proximity even on the lawn and in the house, if there was the least possibility of the young chief seeing them together. Winona absented herself from the house for two whole days, but, on the morning of the third she came. There was a new, proud, half grieved shyness in her manner that had a wonderfully softening effect.

Virginie met her with hysterical tears and laughter, and clasped her in her arms. The Indian girl greeted each one of the inmates of the house kindly, but Mrs. Perrine thought there was the slightest shade of scorn and impatience in her manner and tone when she addressed Celie.

Virginie brought out a basket of work, and the two friends went to their favorite place, a rustic seat

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between two thorn trees, over which a wild grape vine had thrown its tendrils till trees and vine were mingled in one indistinguishable mass of foliage. It was near the water's edge, and within a few rods of the house. The two dusky heads nearly touched as they bent over their gay bead work, chatting and laughing. Mrs. Perrine, watching them, hoped that the recent trouble would die away, and she determined to double her kindness to Winona, and endeavor to soften, through her, the resentment of Samoset and Gray Wolf. Conny Haines came in, and, pointing to the two girls in the shade, congratulated Mrs. Perrine and Celie on the promise of a happy adjustment of the difficulty. She patted Celie's fair hair playfully, calling her "a little white kitten—a very velvety-footed white kitten, to steal into the heart of the gallant Gray Wolf right before the eyes of her unsuspecting friends."

Celie laughed nervously, begging Conny not to mention the affair, adding, "I think I shall never like the woods any more; I want to go away where there are all white people, and soldiers even amongst them, to make the bad ones afraid and the good ones safe."

Ah! blood will tell. Celie's Bohemian ancestors were too far away in the past to influence their fragile descendants. She pined for the "security of streets" enjoyed by her more immediate progenitors. Mr.

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Perrine came in from the fields, and stopping at the door doffed his hat to the two embroiderers in their bower; then remarked to his wife:

"I am glad to see Winona here again, it looks as if the clouds of the last few days were going to blow away. Don't be shy of her, Celie; I think she had no desire to further her brother's suit, and I believe she's good at heart, and loves Virginie quite as well as she pretends."

Mr. Perrine sat down with a book. Mrs. Perrine, Conny and Celie were busily fashioning summer clothing, and chatted as they worked. Pauline came and went, in her preparations for the midday meal. Occasionally Mr. Perrine looked up and smiled as Virginie's gay laugh floated out and mingled with the pleasant summer sounds that filled the air.

Suddenly, in the midst of all this peaceful beauty, there came a shivering cry—a sound not human, not brutal, but fearful, indescribable—an indefinite expression of terror and alarm, of menace and threatening. Mrs. Perrine and the two girls sprang from their chairs and stared at each other with blanched faces. Pauline, setting down a basket of fresh vegetables she had bought from the garden, whispered, with white, trembling lips, "It is the Manitou;" and she crossed herself devoutly and dropped on her knees. Poor thing! She had lived many years in a convent, and

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now, in her fright, old habits, old beliefs, asserted themselves.

Three times, in quick succession, that terrible cry was repeated, echoing through the forest and floating out over the sunlit lake.

"In the name of all that's fearful!" exclaimed Mr. Perrine, starting to the door. Mrs. Perrine, following closely, pointed to the two girls by the thorn trees. They had dropped their work on the ground, and stood close together, gazing toward the trees that skirted the banks of Manitou creek, the outlet of the lake. Virginie had her arms outstretched and her parents could see that every vestige of color had left her face. Mr. Perrine started toward his daughter, when again that terrible cry rang out, and nearer, more horribly distinct, than before, expressing more clearly human fear and brute ferocity. He looked in the direction Virginie was indicating, and what a sight met his eyes! For an instant he believed himself the victim of some demoniac delusion. So rapid is thought, he theorized, in a flash, on the influence of time, place and circumstance; and, clasping his hands over his eyes, he said to himself, "I am fevered and delirious. There is nothing real in all this." But the reality was proven by a hoarse, unnatural whisper close beside him:

"It is Gustave, our son! Oh, immortal power of Goodness! who has done this?"

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Clinging to each other, the parents went to meet their son. He advanced shrieking, rending his garments, now nothing but shreds, throwing out his arms as if resisting legions of fierce attacking creatures, tearing up young trees and wringing them into fragments, rushing frantically away from larger trees, then assailing them with saplings he uprooted, and with it all, groaning, crying, a pale, bleeding, demented mass of agony. As his parents approached him, he waved them off, calling out in a hoarse, thick voice:

"Go! go! What has happened to you? Your eyes stand out of their sockets; your hair is coiling serpents and your faces are covered with ulcers. Look out on the water! there is Manitou! A mixture of serpent and demon. The water is full of fearful things—serpents and lizards and enormous toads. See the gibbering apes that leap here and there over them. Oh, father! do not come near me! Mother, stand back! what has made you both so horribly loathsome?" And Gustave pushed by his father and mother, they too stunned and bewildered to detain him, even if he had not possessed a maniac's strength. On he went toward the house, yet seeming to have no intention of going there, or any where, but merely moving on, urged by his terror of his imagined surroundings.

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His father followed him, wondering, conjecturing, bringing his fragmentary knowledge of medicine, with almost superhuman effort, to bear on this wreck that a few hours before had been his strong, handsome, rational son. That he had imbibed some powerful poison, there could be no doubt; nothing else could produce delirium of this fierce type in so short a time. His thoughts were rapid and conclusive, yet of what avail was it to conclude Gustave had been poisoned? What good even in knowing what it was, and when and how administered, yet remain in ignorance of the powerful counter-actor? Mrs. Perrine came to the two cowering girls by the arbor, and led them to the house. On the lawn Gustave was walking up and down, throwing out his arms, muttering and screaming by turns. His father strove to gain his attention, or touch him with his hands; but he shook his head, covered his eyes with his hands, and kept up such rapid and erratic movements, it was impossible to come near him. Mr. Perrine looked about for counsel or assistance. His first glance fell upon his wife.

"My precious Elise;" and he took her in his arms. "This is terrible; but be brave, dear, he's poisoned, whether by accident or design makes small difference now. Stay by me." Turning to Virginie and Winona he said:

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"Daughter, go find Victor and Jacques; you are fleet of foot, bring them quickly. Winona will go with you," and he added solemnly, taking a hand of each girl, "May Manitou deal alike with you while you are together."

The Indian girl's face flushed. She read in the look and manner of her white friend that her people were suspected of working the calamity that had befallen Gustave Perrine. That she, too, suspected it, she would not have denied, yet she held her personal honor and innocence unimpeachable. She passed one arm about Virginie, and looking up at Mr. Perrine fearlessly, she answered:

"Manitou, and all the dwellers in the forest who love and fear him, will allow no evil to touch Winona's sister, the Wild Sunflower. Come."

Together they sped away to the fields. Conny Haines stood in the house door, supporting in her arms the half fainting Celie. Old Pauline was on her knees in a corner, a crucifix before her and a rosary in her hands. Where these relics of her early life religion had been hidden away all these years, no one but she could have told.

"Conny," said Mr. Perrine, "I wish you'd go and bring your father. Come here, Celie, and speak to Gustave—no, he'll not harm you," as the girl hesitated, "he knows us all, and though we are frightful to him, he has no wish to hurt us."

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As Gustave continued walking back and forth, his father met him, holding Celie before him. Suddenly the raving ceased. Gustave stood still and held out his hands. A pitiful smile gleamed on his blood and dust-stained face, and his voice was low and gentle as he said:

"Ah! little Celie! Only a ghost, a spirit, nothing but a shadow. He killed her. I thought he would, and the timid little ghost still stands by you, father. In the hereafter we keep our individuality then. But why is Celie not afraid of these monstrous things about us? is it because she's dead, and they can not harm her? You, father, these ugly sights have changed you and my dear, beautiful mother. How frightful she has grown. It would have been better if she had died, as Celie did. But how did she die? Did Gray Wolf come suddenly with gun or hatchet, and with ugly scars let out her sweet life, or was it the fright and disgust from the touch of his hands that killed her? How was it, little ghost? Tell me how you died."

He advanced a step nearer, looking intently at her.

"Dear Gustave, I'm not dead; there's nothing to be afraid of; here are only papa and mamma, the trees and water and bright sunshine. Come into the house and let us bathe your face and hands, and put clothing on you. Come."

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She went toward him, attempting to take his hand, but he eluded her, and stepping rapidly backward he waved his arms, calling out:

"No, no! see these serpents clinging to me! these are my clothes; these Manitou sends to all who offend the red men. I have offended them, and all the green woods and bright waters are filled with monsters because of it. So Naoman said, and Naoman is very wise."

"Oh, I thought so, I thought so!" groaned Mr. Perrine. "He reads the footsteps of Manitou in the forest as the white man reads his book. But what shall we find in our books to match this maddening secret of the forest?"

"Don't despair, husband; here is Victor, and better still, Conny, with her father. Perhaps Mr. Haines' long residence in the woods has made him acquainted with many things we have never dreamed of while we were secure."

Breathless with haste came Virginie and Winona, followed closely by Victor and Jacques.

At the same time, from the path that led into the woodland, emerged Mr. Haines and Conny.

All that Mr. Haines had not been told by his daughter, he took in at a glance as he joined the sorrowful group. He gazed for a moment at the raving youth as he hurried hither and thither, then approached

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Mr. and Mrs. Perrine. Taking a hand of each, he said, kindly and reassuringly:

"Do not be so grieved, my friends, this is certainly poison that is not intended to kill, but only torment you all. Gustave is so perfectly well and strong there is much to work on. No doubt, in a state of disease, what he has taken, would be a powerful antidote. I have brought with me my medicine case. I have remedies for all natural poisons, and if we can manage to administer to him—"

"Oh, if we only can!" said the mother; "but we are all so frightful to him."

"I'll speak to him," said Mr. Haines, and he moved so as to meet Gustave face to face. But before he could utter a word, Gustave cried out:

"Oh, Mr. Haines! after all your years in the woods, you too have changed. You too have fallen under the curse of Naoman, and grown hideously ugly, loathsome with disease and horrid with contortions. Oh! the Imanus of Pauline's stories never could have been as frightful as are the faces of my friends. Where is Pauline? Come here, Pauline," he called, as running past those who watched him, he leaned in at the open window of the room where Pauline still knelt, weeping and praying. "Ha! ha!" he shouted, "Imanus was nothing to this. Poor Pauline, never but barely presentable—yet, she

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was so kind, so good, so unselfish," and he sobbed aloud. "Poor, dear, nursey Pauline—how pitiful! Naoman might have spared her." Mr. Haines had prepared a mixture in a cup, and he now approached Gustave, saying:

"Here Gus. drink this, you are tired and thirsty."

"Ha, ha! just what Gray Wolf said to me when I met him by the creek. How kind and thoughtful he was; how anxious for my comfort! How he looked in my eyes as he said, 'Let the girl go; who wants the girl; she's like a snow drift, she'll melt away in the hot sunshine. Drink and let us be friends.' And I drank with him, as we clasped hands; my right foot touched his while he pledged me his friendship. Then the air grew white and misty. Then came lightning, and the air grew black. Then Naoman came, asking me to drink. Ha! ha! so friendly. What he gave me was liquid fire, but I drank it, and the darkness grew alive with these fearful creatures. They will follow me forever. Naoman said so. I have offended Manitou in his children, and this is my punishment. Don't offer me anything more. I'll drink no more." With a quick, unlooked for movement, he dashed the cup from Mr. Haines' hand.

"My son, my son," said Mrs. Perrine.

"Yes, yes, mother; no doubt you love me still,

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horrible as we all are. Have we changed, too, in our souls, our spirits, that mysterious inner life? Ha! ha! ha! that beautiful theory of the loving, peaceful soul beautifying a plain face, and lending grace to an ungainly body. Naoman knows better. He holds the secret all in that brown cup that looked so much like —like—" his voice sank to a whisper, "oh, so much like a skull. Yet, my mother loves me still, and my father drops great serpent and icicle tears down his snakey beard for me. They love me still—but see those monstrous apes and all those horned, nameless creatures! See how they gambol with and caress each other. Love is in all things, as my mother has told me often and often—such a beautiful theory."

He still walked rapidly about, resisting, with hands and feet, his invisible foes. A consultation had been going on while Mr. Haines prepared in a cup the remedies he selected.

"I see no other way," he said. "Without anything to counteract it, he may possibly wear it off. In that case he will only be weakened and recover entirely in a short time. But there is a possibility of convulsions, of paralysis, or of permanent insanity. I advise, as I would were it my own child instead of yours. If persuasion will not do, we must force him."

"So pitiful," said Mrs. Perrine. "He was never forced to do anything in his life. We have always led him."

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"True, madam. But here is an outrage of nature. One violence must often necessarily be followed by others. Try to coax him first."

As Gustave again approached the sorrowful group, his father and mother, with Mr. Haines following closely, met him. Mrs. Perrine said:

"Gustave, dear, please drink this for mother," and she was about to take the cup, but it was only a dexterous movement of Mr. Haines that prevented it from being again thrown to the ground, while, with shrieks, the poor youth fled from them.

"Go and speak to him, Celie," said Mr. Perrine. "You are less frightful to him than the rest of us; and do you, Victor and Jacques, stand ready with me. Together we must overpower him, and Mr. Haines can probably force him to swallow this potion. It is cruel to let him suffer in this way."

Celie approached Gustave, who no sooner saw her than he stood still, gazing earnestly at her.

"Poor little ghost! Little white spirit—so sorry for me. Where did they lay your precious body? Is it below us, here under the white clover?" and he stooped, patted the turf gently, then sat down upon it. His father, Victor and Jacques had gone behind him. Mr. Haines put the cup he held into Celie's hand, saying in a low, even tone:

"Don't speak—offer him this—he'll not harm you; we'll all look to that."

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White and still as if she were in reality the spirit he thought her, the girl approached the maniac slowly, and never for an instant letting her eyes lose their hold on his. She came close, kneeling on the ground before him.

"It is here; down here, under the clover," he said.

She assented, with the slightest perceptible motion of her head, still gazing steadily into his glassy, blood-shot eyes. She slipped one hand into his, while with the other she placed the cup to his lips. Slowly and apparently painfully, he swallowed the draught. As she removed the cup, he looked about him, shuddered and moaned as his gaze wandered back to Celie, who still knelt by his side.

"Oh, if they would only leave me! Can not you take me under the clover? They surely could not follow me there!"

Celie shook her head, and leaning nearer, she passed her hand over his bruised and bloody face. He closed his eyes heavily as if in pain, and excessive weariness. Growing confident, she ventured to wipe his face with her handkerchief, and smooth the damp and matted hair. He made no resistance, but dropped himself at full length on the ground. Mrs. Perrine brought pillows from the house and they placed them under his head. Mr. Haines brought a basin of water, on the surface of which he scattered a white powder,

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telling Celie to bathe the head and face of their patient. At the first touch he opened his eyes, murmuring:

"Little ghost—little dead Celie."

"Oh, Mr. Haines," asked Mrs. Perrine, "should'nt he be carried into the house? Let us prepare a bed for him at once."

"Not yet, not yet; in a few minutes, we can give him another dose, then remove him with safety. Now, I fear the motion, and sight of us all so close to him, might arouse him, and produce his ravings worse than ever."

So, grouped about him, speaking in whispers, scarcely daring to breathe, they waited. Gustave lay at full length, his arms thrown out, his eyes half closed. He muttered, moaned and twitched convulsively. In a few minutes Mr. Haines again placed in Celie's hand the cup with the quieting draught, while he raised slightly the head of the sufferer. He swallowed the mixture without a word, scarcely lifting his heavy eyelids. Then the mutterings grew lower, mere whispers. The moanings died away into heavy sighings at intervals. The tossing limbs lay composed and quiet, save a slight twitching of the muscles.

"How long will this last?" asked Mr. Perrine.

"I can scarcely say. Gus. is strong; what a dose he must have had from those devils! The opiate I

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have given him is powerful, and I've given a large dose too. I think we may take him into the house now. Then as long as he sleeps I'll not disturb him, but as soon as he wakens, I shall administer what seems to be needful."

Carefully they carried him in and placed him on his bed. And all the remainder of that bright day they watched and spoke in whispers, and stole about lightly and closed doors softly, and wondered what might next befall them. Once Mr. Perrine said:

"If they had killed him outright, it might have been better than to have burdened him with this strange and dreadful thing."

Winona stayed about till everything was quiet, then pressing Virginie's hands, without a word, she walked rapidly away.

The day drew to a close, and Gustave still slept. Several times during the afternoon he had partially awakened, but had swallowed without resistance all medicines offered him. When the tea table was spread, and all remembered they had eaten nothing since morning, for the first time in all the day one after another acknowledged a feeling of weariness. They sat down to Pauline's bountiful tea, Mr. Haines placing himself where he could command a view of his patient in the adjoining room.

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CHAPTER XIV.

A VISITOR IN THE DARKEST HOUR.

ONCE the sleeper moaned, and at the same time those who sat nearest the door thought there was a slight noise in the room, as of lifting and replacing the cover of the cup that held the medicine.

"What's that?" asked Mrs. Perrine, starting from the table.

"I heard nothing but poor Gus. moaning," Mr. Perrine answered.

"I heard something else," persisted the mother.

"And so did I," said Virginie; "a noise with the cup."

"Might it not have been some one of our cups or plates here at table?" asked Victor.

"Perhaps it was," Mrs. Perrine answered from the door of her son's room, where she had gone, followed by Mr. Haines.

"Mamma," said Celie, "even if you heard a noise with Gustave's cup, you see the table is near the win-

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dow, and the robins and swallows often fly in; I've fed them there sometimes when reading with Gustave."

"That was it, I think," said Mr. Haines reassuringly, as he looked about him. "Nothing more than a disappointed feathered forager."

An hour later, as the family sat together in the dusk, Gustave called his father, and though his voice was weak, it had the old natural tone. The father, mother and Mr. Haines all hastened to the bedside. Gustave was leaning on his elbow and pressing one hand to his head.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Am I sick? Please give me some water; I'm very thirsty, and feel queer and helpless."

Mrs. Perrine sat down beside him and drew his head to her bosom. "Yes, dear, you are sick, and we've been very much alarmed for you; but, here is your drink," as Mr. Perrine held to his lips a goblet of fresh water.

"Ah, that's very good. Water never tasted just that way before," said Gustave after drinking long and eagerly.

"And here," said Mr. Haines, "is your medicine. We hope to have you up within a day or two, as well as ever."

Gustave swallowed the medicine without any hesitation, then asked for more water.

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"That's very disagreeable stuff, Mr. Haines, and who ever knew you before as a medical man?"

"No college, certainly," answered the impromptu nurse and physician, "but more than one poor fellow in the woods has been glad to avail himself of my instinct for doctoring and nursing, pieced out as it is by considerable experience, and a little picked out of books. You know necessity is the mother of professions as well as inventions. Now you must try to sleep again."

Try he did, by lying very quietly, but he failed. After a few minutes, he said, "I think I could sleep if 'twere not for the dreams; but, as soon as I close my eyes, there come such queer shapes, and such disagreeable things—such long waving curtains, and strings, and shreds of moss, and dead leaves flitting about me, and—I'm dreaming now, now with my eyes open. I can see you all, and such horrid creatures all about you. What does it mean? You said I was sick, but you are all worse than sick! Oh, this is terrible! You look as that poor fellow did that we found in the river two years ago. He had been in the water a long time. The fish had gnawed his face, and he was swollen and unsightly—but, oh, mother! father! not worse than you!"

He covered his face with his hands. Consternation seized the weary family and friends. What new phase

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was this? Had Mr. Haines' antidote so soon lost its power? He hastily prepared another draught, but Gustave was raving; sitting on the side of the bed with his feet on the floor, he threw his pillows and bed clothing about him, threatening, entreating, warding off the attacks of the fierce creatures of his disordered brain. Vainly his father and mother persuaded. They might as well have talked to the rustling leaves outside. He answered them with deploring their horrible faces, and urging them to free themselves from the serpents and other reptiles twining about them.

Celie approached him, but he pushed her away; then, as if remembering something, he said:

"Did you take me under the clover with you? Why do you let these creatures follow us? Oh, Naoman! what a wise man you are. You must be a god. None but a god could call forth such a world of horror in so short a time." He arose and ran about the room.

"Close the outside doors, Jacques," called Mr. Perrine. We must keep him in the house at all events. Oh, this is heart-breaking! Mr. Haines, what do you advise? What do you think? Will you give him another dose; by force, if necessary?"

"What I think," said Mr. Haines, in a low tone, "is that the bird that rattled the cup awhile ago, was a most evil bird. That draught was tampered with

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from outside, and we must administer, by some means, another potion. My medicines are pure and strong, and they could not so soon have lost power over him if he had not been poisoned again. I will await your patience. We can certainly hold him and force the first dose into his mouth. After that there will be no difficulty. Then we must be doubly vigilant."

For nearly an hour the family endeavored by persuasion and strategy to induce Gustave to take the medicine. The only result was increased violence in his refusals. As a last resort, his father, Victor and Jacques seized him and laid him on his bed. His mother clasped his head in her arms in spite of his struggles, and thus held, moaning, shrieking and protesting, he strangled, and choked, and swallowed about half the draught Mr. Haines had prepared.

"Fortunately it was mixed very strong," Mr. Haines remarked, noticing how much was wasted. "I think you can let him arise now if he wishes to; he will soon be quiet."

But the effects were not so rapid as they expected. Gustave was wilder than he had been in the morning, though showing less strength. He talked more, but walked about less, and seemed depressed—his bursts of wild laughter ending in hysterical weeping. When Mr. Haines offered him his medicine, he snatched the cup from his hands, drank the contents, and threw

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the cup on the floor. As it lay shattered, he trampled the fragments with his bare feet till they streamed with blood. The pain this occasioned seemed to quiet him. He sat down and watched Pauline pick up the fragments, and when he saw she was crying, he said:

"Poor Pauline! good nursey! I'll not grieve you again. You always punish me with your patience."

He threw himself on the bed, muttering, starting, twitching; and at last he slept.

"Now," said Mr. Haines, "he must not be left alone for one minute. Do you, Mrs. Perrine, send these young people to bed. Go to bed yourself, and I will watch till morning."

But both husband and wife protested he should not watch alone; and though they should not know what to do without his advice, yet they too would remain with Gustave.

Mrs. Perrine sent the three girls away, comforting them as she could. Pauline and Jacques must rest, for how would the house go on without them. The two servants went away together, but not to immediate rest and sleep. Mrs. Perrine, after an hour or two, hearing a murmuring sound, stole to the door of their sleeping room, and distinctly heard them at their prayers. Victor threw down a pile of furs just outside the room where Gustave lay, and knowing he

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would be called if needed, he was soon sound asleep. The three watchers sat near the bed of the sufferer, Mr. Haines scarcely allowing his eyes to leave his face for a moment. There was but little said. Twice Gustave raised himself on his elbow, looking fearfully about him, then took the medicine, without hesitation, from any hand that presented it, and sank again into slumber. Just as the first gray streaks of dawn were showing in the sky, when watchers find it most difficult to resist the inclination to sleep, Mr. Haines, who sat nearest the window, felt that drowsiness, that insensible feeling creeping over him, that sensation of numbness, as if the whole body had gone to sleep while the eyes were open and staring. He was gazing steadily at Gustave, when he became sensible of a movement near him. His patient was sleeping, with every muscle in repose. He turned toward the husband and wife, but they, to all appearances, had succumbed to drowsiness. She rested her head on his shoulder, and he leaned over till his cheek touched her hair. The lamp had burned out, and the room was in that gray gloom peculiar to the last hour before sunrise. All within was quite motionless. Still, somewhere near, something was moving. The watcher listened without changing his position. He sat facing the bed, his side to the open window, and without turning his head, he became aware of a swaying of the

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vines that half covered the aperture. He sat as if asleep. The leaves moved perceptibly. It was not a bird; too cautious for that. Another instant and a slender, dark hand lifted the vine leaves, and a pair of piercing eyes looked into the room. Mr. Haines stretched out his legs heavily, spread his arms and yawned; turning as he did so to the window. The hand disappeared from amongst the vines, there was a light, rapid step, and as Mr. Haines leaned from the window, a tall form disappeared round a projecting angle of the house.

"Gray Wolf," he muttered. "We'll re-arrange the furniture of this room sometime to-day."

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CHAPTER XV.

LIKE A SHADOW IN THE SUN.

WHEN Gustave awoke that morning, all signs of wildness had disappeared. He arose, dressed himself with but little assistance, and though very pale, and, as he said, a "little shaky," he took his place at the breakfast table with the family. Mr. Haines, after many charges of caution, dealt out a few, very professional looking little powders, and giving Conny, Virginie and Victor precise directions for their use, he took his departure, saying he would sleep awhile in his own cabin. He also urged Mr. and Mrs. Perrine to rest themselves. He told them of the visitor at the window, thinking it best that they should fully understand their danger. The little table was moved to the opposite wall. There was no farm work done that day. Jacques and Pauline went into the garden, working together amongst the well tended beds of vegetables, and talking in a suppressed, fearful way. Mr. and Mrs. Perrine, finding Gustave wide awake and cheerful, and thinking all would be

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safe with the young people and the Vendres to watch him and administer the medicines, went away to their own room to rest and sleep. Victor read to the three girls who sewed in a listless fashion very unlike their usual manner; and Gustave sat with them, languid and pale, taking, in a jocular way, the little powders when they were brought him. So the time passed until near noon, when Gustave, finding himself growing drowsy, said he would go to his room.

"Wouldn't you better wait awhile and have dinner with us?" asked Virginie.

"Oh, no, I'm not hungry now; maybe I'll have a nap and be up in time for dinner too, feeling better."

Virginie followed him, arranged the pillows, drew the curtain over the window, and by the time she was ready to leave the cool twilight of the room her brother was sleeping soundly.

"Leave it open;" said Victor as she came out and was drawing the door after her.

"Wont we disturb him?"

"Not so much as some others might," and Victor pushed the door wide, looked about the darkened room, at the sleeper, glanced at the little folds of paper on the table, and gave a nod of approval. "Now, I shall sit here by the door," he said, "and I'm sure nothing can disturb him."

The dinner hour came and went, and Gustave still

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slept. His father and mother, rested and refreshed, had stolen in to look at him, and found him sleeping calmly and naturally. The afternoon was sultry for June; all the family was indoors but Jacques, whose habits of industry would not allow him to be idle; he still made a pretense of working in the garden and training the long branches of eglantines about the house. All was motionless and silent in the room of the sleeper—silent, for his slumbers were so deep his breathing was almost imperceptible; motionless, but for the window curtain swaying slightly at intervals by the breeze. Once or twice, as the lifting of the curtain sent waves of light across the room, Mrs. Perrine started; but finding all quiet as she looked at her son, she said she was nervous and excitable, and sat down again. The afternoon was waning when the first sounds came from the room. Then, before any one could reach him, Gustave sprang from his bed with an exclamation of anger and fear. As soon as his mother saw him she knew that they were again baffled—the work of the night and day was undone, and, by some subtle, demoniac agency, the poison was again rioting in his brain. All was again grief and consternation. They could not imagine how the mischief had been done, as Gustave had swallowed nothing since morning. Victor went to examine the room where he had slept. He put aside the curtain and let in the

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sunshine. The powders lay on the table, as they had been left. He turned back the bed covering and lifted the pillows. As he did so, something soft and dark and warm touched his hand. He, woodman as he was, shivered; but seeing the dark thing lie motionless on the white pillow, he stooped to examine it. Nothing but a wilted dock leaf; but how had it come there? He carried it to Mr. Perrine.

"This was on the bed, by the pillows, consequently near Gustave's head, possibly over his face; it must have been put in at the window. The curtain was lifted by something more than the wind."

Mr. Perrine covered his face with his hands and groaned aloud. How their watchfulness was baffled by the cunning of their enemies. Mr. Haines came in and learned how the day had passed. Again did they go through with what seemed to this miserable family the rehearsal, for the hundredth time, of the sorrowful story. They first tried persuasion, and ended by forcing the antidotes down the throat of the raving youth. Then, surrounded by anxious watchers, he slept and moaned the night away. Victor proposed for that night to stand guard outside. He proceeded to load a brace of pistols. Mr. Perrine, looking on, said:

"My friend, that will not do. We must use no violence. We must meet this treachery with watch-

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fulness. If we were men alone, we might meet it with force, swift and sure, and sell our lives for what they would bring in that way; but, put away your arms, they can be but worse than useless."

This night passed without harm. If it had been designed, the plotters found their victim too well guarded. For several days after this there was no return of the trouble. Work was resumed in the fields, and the household fell into its wonted routine. Gustave stayed quietly in doors; never out of sight of some one of the family, and, though pale, nervous and feeling a continual weariness, his friends were hopeful that his youth and strong constitution would soon repair the terrible shock they had received. It was a week from the time the poison had first been given him. The morning was very warm, and Gustave swung a hammock between two large beech trees near the lake. He took a book, and a fan made of the feathers of prairie chickens, and expressed himself perfectly comfortable to Virginie, who followed him, gave him a little push to "start him" as when they were children, and then returned to the house.

Mrs. Perrine, going about her household duties, caught glimpses of him as he swung back and forth, reading and fanning away the insects. He seemed so secure her anxiety was lulled, and a full hour passed

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while she was engaged in another part of the house. Then, her presence being no longer necessary, she told Pauline she would go and sit awhile by Gustave. He lay asleep. His book had fallen to the ground, and the fan covered his face. The mother stepped carefully as she drew near, but, noticing the sleeper move uneasily, and, at the same time hearing his breath come heavily, she lifted the fan from his face. As she did so, a vile, sickening odor was wafted into her face, and a bunch of wilted green leaves adhered to the fan. She glanced quickly from these to her son. His face was livid and convulsed, and flecks of foam stood on his lips.

"Again, again! O Power ineffable, is there no mercy? not even death!" she moaned.

The sound of her voice broke entirely the troubled sleep, and Gustave sprang from his hammock, staring wildly about him, and muttering hoarsely of what he saw.

"Come home with me, dear, come," pleaded his mother.

"No, no," he cried, starting back from her, "there is no home for me—no rest, no peace, nothing but horrors on horrors. Oh, if I could die, mother," he said, earnestly; "why should I not go into the lake? The Indians say I can not drown there, but in spite of the millions of repulsive, creeping things I see on its

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surface, I think below them all I should find cool, clear water, and death. Shall I try? Life is no longer sweet and beautiful. Why not end it? Those terrible things with horns and teeth and claws will kill me if I approach them, then I shall see them no more."

"Oh, my son, come with me!" And Mrs. Perrine made vain attempts to touch him. He was too agile, and he kept backing, faster and faster, down to the brink of the lake. She thought now the end had come; but just as Gustave, with a fierce cry as of terror and resistance, and covering his face with his hands, stepped into the water, Mr. Perrine, with Victor and Jacques, rushed past the swooning mother, and seizing Gustave, bore him, struggling and shrieking, to the house.

Ah, well! why follow, day after day, the sorrows of this persecuted household? There seemed to be no end to the artifices of the Indians, no limit to their desire for revenge. And such was the peculiarity of Gustave's affliction, that though he remembered, in his quiet hours, all the phantasies he was tortured with, and knew the cause of them, yet, when the poison was at work, nothing was so real as the sights it engendered. A full month passed as this week had gone; and the Perrines wondered if they would be allowed to go away at the usual time, or if they might

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not all be murdered, or poisoned as Gustave had been.

A blight seemed to have fallen upon them and all their surroundings. Mr. Perrine, struck to the heart through his son, lost his buoyant hopefulness, and his usual demeanor was a gentle sadness. His wife grew paler, thinner, feebler day by day. Her sunny, brown hair was bleached in these few weeks to a silvery whiteness, and her merry, loving brown eyes peered pitifully through a misty veil of tears.

Pauline, watching her mistress as she went slowly about the house, noting how shadow-like she grew as their great affliction continued, found no comfort but before her crucifix. The girls, tender and watchful, feeling on their young hearts the shadow of a coming calamity, clung about their parents, striving to soothe and cheer, but usually ending in floods of tears.

Conny Haines was with them always now, her strong, cheerful, helpful nature, and her sweet temper a very tower of strength to her young companions.

Winona, for a time, came to the house daily, but finding she was watched closely, she absented herself entirely, but waited somewhere near for the chance of seeing Virginie.

The farm was neglected. The wheat ripened and dropped from the stalk, or fed the flocks of birds that missed their morning and evening supplies on the

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lawn. The young corn was overgrown with weeds; the vegetables were thought of only by Pauline when she left her prayers long enough to prepare food for the family. The farming utensils rusted where they were dropped in the fields, and the domestic animals ran wild through the woods and swamps. There was no thought but for the care of Gustave and the going away in the autumn. There was now, too, a growing fear that Gustave was rapidly exhausting his strength. The frequent administration of the poison, the powerful remedies employed, the abstinence from food, and the loss of sleep, as well as the long wanderings he latterly indulged in through the woods and fields while suffering, were making inroads on his naturally perfect health and fine physique. It seemed to matter little how closely he was guarded; there was always some instant when a bunch of leaves, or flowers, or feathers, or a piece of wampum could be laid over his face when he slept, or his food or medicine tampered with. Detection, to the worn-out, grief-blind friends, seemed impossible.

Mr. Haines at times appeared utterly bewildered. Since the first night of watching there had been no one seen. Sometimes a shadow flitted by, there was the rustle of a leaf, the breaking of a twig, or the call of a bird close at hand, that was all; but this little all was sure to be followed by madness for Gustave. He was

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pale, thin, torn and bruised. More than once he had wandered till utterly exhausted, and in a state nearer death than life been carried home. Mr. Haines was with them constantly, but all his medical and forest lore failed to discover by what name was known, if known at all to civilization, this fearful poison he battled with. He grew troubled and thoughtful. Mr. Perrine, watching him, suspected the cause, but said nothing, too sad and dispirited to think of any means of palliating the evil, or lessening the weight of the blow for others who would writhe under it when it fell. Six weeks had passed since the shadow of evil first fell upon the happy household. Gustave had been wild all day, but now at sunset, he was sleeping. The father and Mr. Haines stood by him for some time, then the latter closed the window, and thrust in a fastening that had been used when the family was absent. Mr. Perrine said:

"The night is very warm, why close the window, my friend?"

Mr. Haines sighed heavily and turned away. He entered the room where the family sat, followed by his host. Taking up his medicine chest, and selecting an empty phial, he said:

"My friends, if hope, and love, and vigilance ever availed human creatures anything, I pray you, use them now. I have given poor Gus. the last of my

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medicine. I can do nothing more without a trip to some seaport, or some of the large Canadian towns. Even that might be useless. This case, with its contents, my father brought from India."

And the queer, quiet man sat amongst them and wept; the first tears he had shed since the grave closed over his wife. Conny arose and approached her father, her own tears falling like rain. She soothed him with caresses and gentle, earnest words. Then, for a few moments, all were silent. Watching and care had been useless, so why talk of what had been done, or resolve what to do. Mrs. Perrine arose, saying to her husband:

"Come, let us go to Samoset."

He sighed, but prepared to go with her without a word. Celie brought a soft, gray mantle and wrapped it about the thin form of her mother, drew the hood close down to her face, and smoothed back the stray locks of faded hair. Husband and wife went away together, but no one noticed that Celie disappeared by another door a few minutes later.

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CHAPTER XVI.

SANS MERCI.

ALONG the wood path that led to the Pottawatomie village, slowly and silently went the sorrowing pair. Only one thing now remained to be done. It might be a fruitless errand, still they would try. Samoset sat at the door of his wigwam smoking. As his white neighbors approached he looked at them sideways, but neither spoke to them nor rose from his seat. Mrs. Perrine, looking past him into the lodge, saw Gray Wolf. For all these weeks he had kept himself from the sight of any of the family by the lake. Mrs. Perrine thought, in the uncertain light, he looked thin, and his eyes had an unaccustomed, fevered brightness. The visitors bade Samoset good evening, then waited for him to speak; but his only greeting was a low grunt. Mr. Perrine said:

"Samoset, you have been our friend now for many years. Ever since I first met you in the cold and snow of that winter day, so long ago, you have been most kind. You have made my residence here in your

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country safe and pleasant when I could no longer live in my own land beyond the seas. In all these years I've had no trouble, no difficulty but such as might have come to any man making as great a change as I did in his way of life; but in all my trivial troubles, in all my ignorance of the way to live here in the forest, I have had your sympathy and help. You have been a kindly adviser to me, a father to me and mine, as well as to all your tribe. I have tried to be of some assistance to you and your people. What I could do for you, which I acknowledge has been but little, I have done. Now a terrible calamity is upon us. You know what it is; you know how grieved and helpless we are, and the worst has come. Our friend Haines has exhausted his supply of medicine with which we have palliated the effects of Naoman's doses. Now, our son must die if those doses continue. This, I am sure, you can prevent."

He paused for reply, but Samoset smoked on in silence, looking away towards the clouds. Then Mrs. Perrine said:

"Samoset, you love your son and daughter; Gray Wolf is as your right hand and Winona is as the apple of your eye. Think, if one of them was in our poor son's place. You have seen him in his madness, you have heard his ravings, you have seen him torn and bleeding and bruised and almost lifeless. Have pity

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on him and us. If you wish to bury our past friendship, let it be so. I shall grieve, but oh! prove yourself the truthful, honest soul you have heretofore shown yourself. Spare our son further torture!"

She ceased speaking, and Samoset arose from the ground. He drew aside the drapery of the wigwam, disclosing fully the form of Gray Wolf, saying, as he did so:

"Look! Do you ask me to pity your son? You say truly, the Gray Wolf is my right hand; but my right hand is as if age had weighed it down, or as palsy had stricken it helpless. My right hand no more goes out to meet the sun when he first touches the tops of the trees and bears him company till he sinks to rest behind the tall grass of the plains. My right hand has forgotten the game that hides in the woods and streams. It no longer handles the bow, the gun or the spear. It steals about like a shadow, or sits idly at home with the women. Pity! My pity is wide as the plains till they reach the mountains. My sorrowful thoughts are many as the leaves of the forest. My tears might fall like the summer rain. But—for whom? Look at the young Gray Wolf. He should have been a great chief to lead my people, now that I am old. He is but a reproach amongst the braves, and a byword amongst the maidens. He is dying for the love of your little White Star."

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The young chief was very much changed, and the change boded no good for the mission of the parents of Gustave.

Mrs. Perrine said: "Samoset, I have used no influence to keep Celie from your son; if she wished to marry him, she would do so; but would you have her his wife only to grieve herself to death? Celie is so gentle; so timid. We have always been very tender with her, she has lived her life like a flower, or a beautiful, delicate tree; just cared for most carefully, all her wants and necessities anticipated if possible. She has never in her life been urged against her will; yet she always does right, she is always loving and dutiful."

"We have eyes, my son and I. We see all the beauty of the White Star—like the lilies on the lake, the aspen in the wood, or the waving grass of the plains. We have ears. We hear her laugh, like the water over the pebbles; her songs, like the birds in the trees, and her loving words like the doves in their nests. Yes, we know. Gray Wolf knows how sweet and gentle she is, and he is dying for her, and my old heart is sick for him." And Samoset sat down and resumed his pipe.

Mrs. Perrine leaned her head against her husband. He drew aside the hood that covered her hair, saying:

"Samoset, look at this! see how the last moon has

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bleached the hair that you used to say was like the waters of Lake Manitou when the sun shone upon it. Now it is like the snow on your wigwam in winter."

The old man glanced upward, sighed and shook his head, but said nothing. Mrs. Perrine, clasping her husband's hand, said:

"Samoset, we could not give Celie to your son against her will, even to save our son from all that Naoman can do to him. Gustave would not wish it. He would die for her sake, rather than live at such a price. She is not our child, only so far as love for her parents in the past, and her own goodness and sweetness have made her ours; but I would not be so unjust as to utter one word of persuasion in this matter, even to save both my own children from the worst that may come to them through my silence. One of the mercies of this life is, that when it becomes intolerable we can lay it aside. Good-bye, Samoset. May Manitou show you the mercy you have shown to us."

The chief frowned, sent forth a great cloud of smoke, but made no answer, and his visitors left him. They disappeared down the path, walking slowly, as they had come.

Just as Samoset lost sight of them, a little figure, with a pale face, stood before him clasping its hands. The Indian started to his feet, surprised out of his taciturnity.

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"White Star!" he exclaimed, stooping to look at her in the dim light.

"Yes, Samoset," said Celie. "I followed papa and mamma; I hid behind this tree here and I heard all that was said. I'm so sorry for them, and for you, and Gray Wolf, and Gustave."

The old man raised his hand, interrupting her.

"Gray Wolf! sorry for Gray Wolf? No, no. Your little white face is deceiving me. You're not grieving for the young chief of the Pottawatomies. It is the white lover, lying sick and helpless, you care for."

"No, Samoset, I'm not deceiving you; I am sorry for Gray Wolf, and I wish he hadn't cared for me—but now that he does, I suppose he can't help it, and, oh, Samoset, if you will only save Gustave! he has always been so kind, so good—and papa and mamma, too—whatever would have become of me but for them. They have all loved me so, and I love them, and all I *can* do I ought to. It won't matter so much for me, after all, and I do want Gustave to be well again and go away. I'll stay here. I'll do anything if you'll have all your people leave Gus. alone; not poison him with leaves and so many things. We can't tell how it is, but it is so dreadful. But, Samoset, do let him get well and go away, and I'll come and stay—and—be—Gray Wolf's—wife. I'll work in the field"—

Samoset had bent over the girl, listening intently to

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her little speech, broken as it was with sobs. Again he stopped her by raising his hand.

"No, you are not lying to me. Your face says, 'I love my white lover so well I will stay here and die if he may only escape secure and happy.' This the face says in spite of the tongue that stammers, 'I'll be the young chief's wife.'"

The old man straightened himself and looked down at Celie. She dropped her chin on her bosom, her hands unclasped themselves, and fell limply down. Her truth and purity had spoken in spite of her.

"Go back," said Samoset, "nurse and tend your white lover. Gray Wolf will win a wife who will keep the hearth warm for him, and her face bright with smiles; not one whose heart lies dead for a departed lover. Go home!"

Drooping and pale, Celie started on her way, went a few steps, then turned and raised her hands as if to make a last appeal. But Samoset motioned her away, and slowly she went on. Several young braves loitered about, but they stood aside to let her pass. The chosen of their chief was sacred in their eyes, and like a shadow she entered the wood. She had gone about half the distance that lay between the village and her own home, when there came a light, rapid step beside her, a strong arm was thrown about her, and a kindly voice whispered, "Poor little White

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Star." Celie was startled, but she felt too weak and miserable to make any resistance; and the thought flashed through her mind, "If it's Gray Wolf, I'll go with him;" but she raised her eyes, to meet in the dusk the friendly, sorrowful gaze of Winona. She threw her arms about the Indian girl, sobbing out:

"Oh, Winona! I offered to be Gray Wolf's wife, but your father wont let me. What shall I do?"

Winona held the weeping child in her arms and passed her hand lightly over her hair, the first caressing touch she had given her in many weeks.

"Yes, White Star," she said. "You offered yourself for my brother. You said you'd be his wife, but it was only to save Gustave, whom you love. Come home."

Winona half carried her along the path, reaching the house just as the family had missed her and were calling, "Celie, Celie," through all the twilight rooms.

Virginie saw her then, looking so tired and frightened, standing just inside the room where Winona had pushed her.

"Where in the world have you been, dear?" Virginie asked, going close to her.

"I followed papa and mamma," she answered in a whisper. "Their talk with Samoset did no good. When they had gone, I told him I'd stay there always if he'd only let Gustave get well and go away, but he

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says I love Gustave best, and I do, but, oh sister, he'll die!" and Celie twined her arms about Virginie, looking into her eyes with such a despairing gaze as showed the strong bright girl a depth of passion and a degree of self-sacrifice she had never dreamed of in her fragile foster sister. Virginie led her away very gently, removed her clothing and persuaded her to go to bed. Then she sat by her, brushing the long light hair, and singing softly a tender little ballad till the weary, frightened eyes closed in sleep.

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CHAPTER XVII.

AND LIFE GREW INTOLERABLE.

THAT night when Mr. Perrine said to his wife, "Dear, you must rest; I will watch Gustave," she answered:

"Why watch? Let them do their work at once."

Mr. Perrine sighed. He, too, was hopeless, but the more delicate physical organization of his wife was fast giving way. The long time of wondering terror, the many hours of suspense, the watchings and very often fastings, the anguish long continued, and now the failure to touch Samoset, had swept away the last vestige of her happy, hopeful spirit. Her heart was broken. Mr. Perrine knew that night, as he stole occasionally from the bedside of his son to that of his wife, and noticed her deep, almost breathless slumber, that the forces of life were giving way. The fire was dying out. She looked so like the dead in her sleep; her face was so white and expressionless; she seemed so withdrawn from all sentient things. Once, as he stood watching her, he murmured: "Poor Elise! it

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will be a mercy to her; we can not tell what may be in store for Gustave." But a thought of his own loneliness brought a twinge of self-pity. It was gone in an instant. He passed his hand lightly over the white hair. "How pitiful that my wife should be like this! All the buoyant, loving life killed, swept away—gone like the beautiful brown of her hair!"

The days went on much as usual. Gustave still received from unseen hands the brain-destroying potions, but they were either given him in smaller doses, or he had no longer sufficient strength for ferocity or long wanderings. He was thin and weak, and talked constantly when under the influence of the poison of frightful things, but in a sad, spiritless way, sometimes even weeping and entreating to be left alone. His mother watched him from her bed, or reclining on a couch or hammock most of the time, so weak had she grown, and the great tears would roll slowly over her sunken, colorless cheeks. When he grew calm, or after waking from sleep, he would sit by her and hold her hand, and talk to her of the change in herself, the gloom and sadness of all the family, and his own emaciation and lack of strength. He would try to understand, to separate the real from the imaginary, to know the truth in regard to the change in himself and the family, and hold it, independent of his vitiated blood.

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Nothing could be sadder than these last days of the last summer the Perrine family lived on the bank of Lake Manitou. The first of September came, and with it light frosts, turning all the green of field and forest to russet, flame and crimson. One lovely, cool morning, Mr. Perrine said to his wife, in a cheery tone:

"Now, Elise, you must try to rouse yourself for our autumn flitting down the Ouabache. Let me see, it is two days, or, is it three days, since you've left your bed?" He knew very well it had been a full week since she had left her bed, excepting when he had carried her in his arms to the door or window for a few minutes; but he strove by this little fiction of forgetfulness to cheat her into arousing herself. "I think," he went on, "if we get away, you and Gustave will both be well in a short time, and I don't believe we shall meet with any opposition from Samoset. Won't you see if you can walk—just to the door?" and he raised her slightly from her pillows.

But Mrs. Perrine, looking into her husband's eyes, saw the effort he was making to keep alive one last shadowy hope and crowd down despair. She stole one wasted hand about his neck as he bent over her.

"Dear," she said, "you know the truth as well as I; wait a few days, then take the children and go down the Ouabache."

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The husband sank on his knees beside the bed, burying his face in the pillows.

"I know, dear," she continued, caressing the bowed head, "I know this is hard for you to bear. It seems selfish of me to die and leave you when trouble has come, and we've been very happy, very happy; but for the children, I might wish you to go out of life hand in hand with me; but the children, our poor Gustave, he needs you so much."

Long and earnest was the communion of these two, so truly wedded, and so near separation. Mr. Perrine, after the first storm of grief had passed, for her sake calmed himself and talked quietly of this coming change, this diverging of their paths, the going away of the one into the Unknown. And she grew brighter, her voice was clearer and stronger than it had been for many days.

Mr. Perrine listening to her, noting every slight change, said to himself, "Oh, if we *should* be mistaken—if she *should* get strong again."

All that day her cheerfulness continued. To each one of the three girls, when she happened to be alone with her, she spoke loving, kindly, encouraging words, which were remembered afterward and recognized as "good bye," but at the time were supposed to be only the usual sweet thoughtfulness of the dear, unselfish mother.

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The sun was setting. Long bars of misty gold fell in at the open door, across the room, and into the chamber where the invalid lay. The family was at tea, and Pauline sat beside her mistress. The two had been talking of some common domestic matter, though the wise old woman was sorrowful enough. She knew her dear Mademoiselle Elise, as she frequently, in the forgetfulness of age, called her, would be with them but a short time, yet she dare not give expression to her sadness when the dying one set the example of cheerfulness. Suddenly, as they talked, there came into the pale face that "change" known to nurses, but before Pauline could start from her chair and cry out, as it was her impulse to do, the thin hand of her mistress clasped her own, and the failing voice whispered, "Call them in—I'm going."

The family gathered about her, stricken with awe in the presence of death, yet calmed into a strange quiet by the peace and sweetness of her face. The husband knelt beside her, clasping her hands. She whispered:

"You know, dear; good bye."

Virginie leaned against her father.

"Oh, mamma, mamma! if I could go too!" she wailed.

"No, my darling," said the dying mother; "comfort your father; you need each other."

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She turned her eyes toward Victor Lagrange. He came, and clasping one hand she had withdrawn from her husband, he stooped low to catch her words. She whispered: "Be kind to my daughter." He kissed the cold hand he held, but uttered not a word; the steadfast look of thankfulness that met her death-bright eyes answered her. Jacques and Pauline stood at the foot of the bed, supporting between them poor half-dazed Gustave. The mother turned her eyes upon them, murmuring, "My son." All made way, and Gustave was led close beside his mother. He knew, by some subtle instinct, that something unusual was happening—something was wrong, and the efforts he made to command his wandering faculties so as to understand, were even more painful to the sorrowing family than the peaceful dying of the mother. He dropped on his knees beside the bed, murmuring inarticulate words of endearment, and passing his trembling hands over the white face before him. With one last effort, the mother raised her arms and drew his head to her bosom. Only for an instant she held him, then the arms relaxed, and Mr. Perrine lifted his son's head from its place above the heart that had broken for him. The low twitter of birds in the vines by the window, the fluttering of wings folding for the night, the soft rustle of leaves, the dreamy murmur of the lake, were the pleasant evening sounds that were all

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about the house. No discordant thing of sight or sound gave notice of the life that had perished through the cruelty of the noblest work of creation.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEAD IN THE PRESENCE OF DEAD GODS.

LATE that night Virginie stole into the room where all that remained of her mother lay. Pauline and Conny had been busy, and the room was white with draperies over all the frame work of the bed, table and chairs. No space of wall was left bare, all was covered with white. There was no trace of color excepting here and there a spray or cluster of bright autumn leaves. On the bed, in her bridal satin lay the dead. The filmy folds of the veil half concealed the face and hands, and a wreath of golden leaves rested where the other time had been orange blossoms. Now the white flowers lay at her feet. The bride of death had donned the colors of her lord. Virginie stood gazing about her with that feeling that is one of the accompaniments of death, the sensation of strangness of things before familiar, that effort of the stunned senses to close up the void made by the departed, and to fit the remnant of what was gracious in life to the new order of things. It

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was several minutes before she saw anything in detail. It was all a great white picture, with dashes of color here and there, and, in the center, the white face, the folded hands, the statue-like figure of "mamma." She stood gazing as if all her senses, but sight, had died. Gradually she became conscious of a low whispering near her. She leaned over the face of the dead, her heart almost bursting with the thought: "She's not dead—dear mamma's alive." But, as she stooped lower to listen, she heard distinctly the whispered words, and, at the same time, saw Pauline crouched on her knees at the further side of the couch mumbling the prayer for the dead. The sudden revulsion of feeling from joyful surprise back to despair aroused the girl and she looked about her. For the last two months Pauline had comforted herself by returning to the religion of her youth, and now the room was lighted with candles that stood at the head and feet of her mistress, and, also at the head, half hidden by a trailing, bright-hued ivy, she had placed an ebony crucifix.

Virginie was shocked. The white drapery was emblematic of the purity of her mother's life. The leaves spoke of death in nature, the harbinger of rest in time of need, and the coming of a new life in beautiful forms. But this image of agony—this commemoration of cruelty, this incentive to resentment and

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hatred, this was the thing most foreign to her mother's gentle nature. She thought not of the species of idolatry it symbolized, not of the slavish subjection of the idolators, not of the millions of outrages committed in the name of the slain Christ; only, it jarred on her sense of the fitness of things; it was the one blemish in the picture of her dead mother. With an ejaculation of repulsion, and an impulsive movement she took up the crucifix; but a strong hand clasped her own, and her father set the little idol down in its place, as he whispered hoarsely:

"Let it be—what does it matter?"

"But," urged Virginie, "Mamma never liked even so much as an unpleasant picture."

"Mamma doesn't care now, and if it comforts Pauline, let it be."

The two stood silent for some time. The father folded his arms and gazed about him. His eyes wandered back to the crucifix.

"Fools!" he muttered. "*That* the supreme agony! When next a new religion is needed, let the god be born a woman. Let her feet touch the black gate to give existence to her child. Then let the child be tortured out of all semblance to humanity, till the mother-heart beneath which he has lain is broken. Agony that comes from hunger and thirst and the rending of flesh, is common to all flesh. The moth-

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er's agony—ah, well; that is common too, in all ages, and my son's mother tasted the dregs of the cup. Poor Elise!" and he touched the folded hands reverently. Turning to the wall he parted the white drapery, and took from its bracket an ivory statuette of the three brethren, Hypnos, Oneiros and Thanatos. He placed it at the feet of the dead, in the circle of the orange wreath.

"Sleep, dreams, death," he murmured. "Sleep, from which we waken into life; dreams, the kindly consoler by the way, and death, the best friend of toiling, sorrowing, despairing humanity."

All that night Victor, Jacques and Mr. Haines worked in the cabin of the latter, and the sounds of their labor, borne through the stillness on the night wind, echoed through the house of mourning. When the morning came they carried through the gorgeous woods a rough box, such as they could make with the tools they possessed, from the trees about them. Yet the inside was sumptuous enough for the last repose of a queen. The evening before, when Mr. Perrine saw these three preparing to go away together, he asked them to wait a minute, then went into the house. He returned shortly with a parcel in his hands.

"Use this," he said, "we shall never need it for a better purpose."

So now the last resting place of Elise, Marchioness

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of Temeraire, was lined with violet velvet, bordered with pearl sown lace. Her court dress of the old days made the splendor of her coffin in the forest of the New World.

As the men put down the box in the outer room, a dusky face, with wild, scared eyes, peered in at the door. It was Winona. Mr. Perrine, coming at that instant from the inner room, took her hand and led her to where the three girls and Pauline sat about the dead. Virginie arose and caressed and kissed her friend, but Winona, with a low, stifled cry, broke away from her and groveled on the floor at the foot of the bed. Virginie, since her mother's death, had gone about silent and dry-eyed, now she rained tears on the black locks of her friend as she knelt beside her. Suddenly the Indian girl lifted up her face exclaiming:

"Wild Sunflower, my people did this! It is an evil thing. Manitou will remember it against us forever. How like the sunlight in lonely places was the mother when she came amongst us! Her hair and eyes were like the brown streams deep in the woods flecked with golden light. Now see! She is all white—white as the spirits of mist that hover over the lake at Manitou's bidding. She who was so full of kindness for us all! How many of our sick she has tended; and our dead have been blessed with her tears

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and the touch of her hands. She cared for our wailing, new-born babies, and soothed the aged into their last sleep. She has crowned our brides with flowers, and taught to our fathers and mothers lessons of patience and duty—"

"Winona," interposed Mr. Perrine, laying his hand on her shoulder, "all that you say is true. Her life was full of goodness and kindness to all who came about her. All evil was hateful to her, and this monstrous thing was so abhorrent that she closed her eyes in eternal sleep rather than witness it longer. How long the rest of us may endure it, we can not tell. She is best as she is. Should a pestilence come and strike us all dead, should the earth open and swallow us, it would be merciful."

The girl listened with her head bowed in shame for her people. Gustave came in. He had wandered about the house the whole night through, and it was only when the sky was red with the rising sun that he threw himself on his bed and sank into a fitful sleep. Now he was walking about, troubled and curious, muttering to himself, asking questions, and fretfully denying what was told him. He would seat himself by his dead mother, kiss her lips and hands, remark their coldness, and insist on carrying her to the fire. Repeatedly had his father, sister, and Conny Haines explained to him the cold, white mystery. A

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gleam of sorrowful intelligence would light his eyes for an instant, and he would cover his face with his hands, but it was too much for his darkened intellect. He would lift his head, stare at them in a stupidly helpless way, then wander out into the sunshine, walk hither and thither, muttering and moaning. Winona watched him now in his dumb sorrow. When he left the room she took a little parcel, whose outer wrapping was sycamore leaves, from her bosom. Handing it to Mr. Perrine, she said:

"This is for Gustave. Make a strong tea of the roots you will find inside. I have watched Naoman and stolen his secret. I know the maddening thing he has given, sometimes in a cup of water, sometimes on a bunch of flowers and grasses that an Indian child might hand Gustave. Sometimes it was dropped into the food that was being prepared for him, sometimes mixed with his medicines. You have found about him clusters of vile smelling leaves, pieces of wampum and bits of fur or feathers. It can be swallowed or inhaled—the effects are the same."

"But if the doses continue?" asked Mr. Perrine, still holding the parcel. "What then?"

"They will not continue. I will prevent it. Naoman is old. My brother, it is Manitou's hand upon him for the wrong he has done, has grown dizzy of head and heavy of foot. He is slow and trem-

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bling. I can follow him, if I can not render the mixture harmless before it leaves Naoman's hand. But give this to Gustave, he will regain his strength and his understanding."

"Oh, why did it not come sooner! It might have saved her as well."

Winona, who had lifted up her face and looked so bright and brave in presenting her discovery and assuring her friends of help, showing no sign of what it might have cost her thus to break allegiance with her own people, now dropped her head on her bosom.

"I have done what I could. My work was hard. I was suspected and watched. I did what I could when I could."

Mr. Perrine was touched. "My dear child, I ask your pardon if I seemed to blame you. I know you have loved us all. I know you have done a great, brave thing; a thing not many would have done. We will do as you say; and here, in the dear presence of her whom we all loved best of all, I tell you I have the utmost faith and trust in you, and I know you would have saved her, too, if you had been able to. May the best blessings of Manitou rest upon you."

When the sun was half way down the west they carried their dead to the grave that had been made near the two beech trees. Here the family had often sat,

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it seemed now in the remote past, to watch the sunset glow die out and the stars appear, while all the beauty and glory of the heavens were reflected in the clear, still water before them. Many times had their songs and laughter floated out over the lake, wakening the echoes on the further side, and they pleased themselves with inventing little romances about the neighbors of their own nationality that were all made of the reverberations of their own happy voices. Now there was but the sound of the wind amongst the dropping leaves, their footsteps, muffled by the grass, and Pauline's shaking voice in the Miserere. Though she knew a priest would have denied the offices of Holy Church to an unbaptized heretic, yet she also knew that there was nothing that was good, and kind, and true, and beautiful, that her mistress had not been in word and deed; and through the mists of superstition in which her mind was shrouded, this lovely flower of faith in humanity had sprung up. The dead was laid to rest in the bosom of her mother, with the tears of husband, children and friends glistening on her face, and lying like diamonds in the folds of the bridal veil. There were no prayers but those mumbled by the old serving woman; no dirge but the wind amongst the trees, and no sermon but that preached by nature in the falling leaf—"From dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." At a little distance, in the sun-

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shine by the edge of the wood, a score or two of Indians had gathered, their dark faces and limbs showing in the clear light like golden bronze. They watched the burial, saw the little group of weeping ones cover the grave with sod and strew it over with bright leaves and autumn flowers, saw them exchange kisses about the little mound as if pledging love to each other for the sake of her who loved them all; then, when with many backward looks they went toward the house, the Pottawatomies stole silently away.

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CHAPTER XIX.

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS.

MY dear friend, I wish for your sake, and that of the children, that it might be otherwise; but, see"—and Mr. Perrine held up his hand to the light.

"I know, I know," Mr. Haines answered, hastily, as he glanced at the transparent hand. "But if you could—if you could have held out till we should have made a change; you're not old, you might have regained the strength that has left you in these last two months."

"Ah yes, so I might, if—but alternatives are at an end. When a piece of machinery made of iron is honey-combed with rust, that is an end of it; and this," tapping where his heart lay, "is worse than rusted machinery, and it has given me repeated warnings of an intention to leave off work at almost any time. Do you think it at all wonderful? I don't say that I loved my wife more than other men love theirs, but you know how she died, how she suffered; you probably understand as well as it's possible for

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any man. You have been with us so long; you know what we were to each other. Still, for the sake of the children, I'd live if it were possible; but it would be useless for me to start south with you. I'd be but a hindrance for awhile, then you'd drop me by the way, when I'd so much rather know that I'll lie here beside Elise."

The two friends were sitting near the grave of Mrs. Perrine. It was a warm October afternoon, but while they were speaking, the atmosphere changed; a chill wind blew across the lake, and Mr. Haines arose and proposed going to the house.

"No, wait a minute. While we are on the subject, we may as well conclude it."

Mr. Haines sat down again, leaned his head on his hand, and waited without looking at his friend.

"You know," Mr. Perrine continued, "all our arrangements. By and by Victor and Virginie will be married. Gustave and Celie were betrothed when she was two years old. But this in the dim future; and I wish you, my friend, to look after them all. You will find a casket, containing our family jewels, in a place I will show you. They will be sufficient to start the children in the world of men and business that I had meant to save them from encountering. This coming winter, for Gustave's sake, it will probably be best to remain south some-

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where, where the climate is mild. Afterwards, use your own judgment. The girls would probably better enter schools, or in some other way be brought to know others of their own age. But I leave it to you. Whatever you do for Conny, let my own lonely ones share."

"My friend," said Mr. Haines, as he clasped in his own the hand of Mr. Perrine, "don't hesitate to command me in any matter that concerns you. All that I can possibly do for your children will be but small return for their kindness and *her's* to Conny through these last seven years."

"Yes, yes; I'm sure of you, very sure, and it's so comforting. I think"—he stopped and pressed his hand to his side. "Ah! this must end soon. Our young people know I'm not well, but they have become so accustomed to gloom, poor things, they seem ready to accept anything. I think it's not necessary to tell them anything. It would only fret them, they would want to help me, and grieve to know that nothing can be done. Say nothing, but let the preparations for the journey go forward. I shall look to my own way, and be ready when the word is given."

They arose to go to the house, and Mr. Perrine, inadvertently it seemed, placed his hand within the arm of his friend; but Mr. Haines felt him leaning heavily upon him, and he knew they would not much longer walk side by side.

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The making ready for this year's southern trip was not the bustling, joyous work it had been heretofore. This was for the last time. They were never coming back. All the old ways were to be forsaken, and a new sort of life entered upon. The familiar things, the trees, the lawn, the lake, the rough, rambling house with its comfort and rustic beauty, the flowers they had planted, the vines they had trained till they seemed a part of their very lives, all these they should never see again. The domestic animals they had reared and petted, the gentle, motherly cows with their soft eyes, and the strong patient oxen, these were all given to Winona. The house itself was to be hers if she would have it, but she shook her head sadly. She could not step into the place of her friends to whom she owed so much. More than all these loved objects, was the little mound by the beeches. Virginie would say, weeping and wringing her hands, "Oh, if we hadn't to leave mamma! It seems so cruel to leave her alone, here where she suffered so much!"

And her father would answer: "Here, too, she was very happy. She knew before she died where her grave would be made, and she was satisfied in knowing her long sleep would be here in this loved spot."

Afterward, Virginie knew why her father was so content; why he expressed no regret at the prospect of leaving the lonely grave: because he had no such

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prospect. He knew that when the little company should wander away to the southland, he too would be quietly sleeping beside Lake Manitou.

It was in the last days of October. There was a lull in the work of preparing for the departure, a looking about for the last few things that should be done, the few mementoes they should carry with them. Celie gathered the little brown seeds of Mrs. Perrine's favorite flowers, and planted them about the grave. "I'll not see them," she said, "but Winona will, and she'll tend them."

In these days they saw but little of the Indians. Sometimes they came, like shadows, to the edge of the woods, but hurried away at sight of any of the family. Samoset had not been seen near the house since the festival day, and Mr. Perrine had not seen him since asking for his assistance for Gustave.

It was a fine autumn evening. The sunshine was warm and bright, but there was a hint of frost in the air. Mr. Perrine had sat by the hillock near the beeches during the greater part of the afternoon. Sometimes he read, sometimes he watched the few birds that flitted about him, or the squirrels that frisked and chattered above him in the beeches. Sometimes some one of the family came and talked to him, but oftenest he sat idly looking into the clouds, or at their reflection in the water before him. The sun was

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setting. Mr. Haines went to his friend for the purpose of leading him to the house. He sat as if looking across the lake, his hands folded on the open book that lay on his knee. Mr. Haines, always chary of words, came close to him without speaking. He noticed his position, stooped and touched his hand, glanced at his face, then softly closed the film-covered eyes.

By the next sunset the grave by the beeches had a companion.

"It is merciful and just," said Mr. Haines to the bereaved children. "They loved in life, and wherever and whatever is the kingdom that lies beyond the grave, they are together."

Next morning the family was aroused by the doleful howling of a dog. Victor and Mr. Haines dressed themselves hurriedly and opened the outer door. The dismal notes echoed and re-echoed through the woods in the morning stillness, and their first glance outside showed them the deer hound of Samoset, sitting on his haunches close by the grave. Near him was something else — something dark and motionless. They hurried toward the spot. The dog, seeing and recognizing them, came cowering and whining to meet them. The dark, silent thing on the ground was a human form, an Indian, wrapped in a mantle of skins, the face pressed against the turf. They raised the

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head, and looked on the face of Samoset, chief of the Pottawatomies. He was stone dead. The ground about him was wet and slippery. They unfolded his mantle, and there on the brawny arm was a long, jagged gash. He had poured out his blood at the graves of his friends. If he chanted his death song, only the night and things of the night heard it. In a few minutes all the family had come from the house and stood about the dead chief, and while Mr. Haines and Victor were deliberating on what should be done, a party of young men of the tribe came in sight. They too, had heard the howling of the dog. Mr. Haines was much disturbed by this tragic ending of Samoset, not knowing what the tribe might conclude had been the part in it of their white neighbors. But he soon learned from those who stood about him, that many of the tribe had dreamed dreams and seen visions, all omenous of this very thing. They took up the body and went slowly and sorrowfully back to the village.

Later in the day Mr. Haines said: "My friends, we must delay no longer. There is nothing now for which we wait, and every day spent here will make our journey more difficult because of the short, stormy days of November. We have cared for our dead; laid them to rest as they wished us to. There is no good and much harm in lingering. To-morrow we must go."

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All knew he was right. Gustave was much better, growing stronger daily, yet he should not be put to the test of inclement weather while camping out, or of forced marches till they reached the Ouabache. While the weather was favorable they must go.

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CHAPTER XX.

FORGET US NOT.

ACCUSTOMED as they were to the sudden changes of this climate, the travelers were not surprised next morning to find the ground covered with snow. It was only a light, thin mantle of white, that would disappear within an hour or two; yet it gave to the home they were leaving a wintry aspect as they looked upon it for the last time. Few words were spoken when they came together at the breakfast table. Old Pauline's hands trembled as she served them, and she strove vainly to suppress or hide her tears. The spirits of the party seemed to be at the lowest ebb. Not even an effort was made toward cheerfulness. Mr. Haines and Victor would allow no pause, but hurried each one in a quiet, unobtrusive way.

When all was ready, when the house door was closed behind them, with tacit consent they passed down the lawn toward the two graves. Silent, and with bowed heads, they stood, while the melting snow

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on the brown leaves of the beeches dropped like tears about them. This was their farewell. No thought now of the musically wailing little song they had sung, it seemed such ages in the past. But, as they stood there, suddenly, far away, faint and sweet, arose the sound of the song, sung by many young voices:

Oh, woods and fields and waters bright,
Oh, drifting clouds, in amber light,
Though far we roam,
Our own loved home
Is still the dearest spot;
Though clearer skies may greet our eyes,
Dear friends, forget us not.

"Forget us not," echoed through the dim, snowy, leaf-strewn aisles of the forest, and over the sparkling lake. "Forget us not, forget us not," sounded the refrain, as the sad little company, dropping tears of sorrow and regret, wended their way along the familiar paths they should never tread again. "Forget us not" was the last faint sound they heard from the Pottawatomie village as they kept on their way. And the sun shone cheerily, the light snow melted, and their footprints disappeared, to be known no more in the woods and fields surrounding Lake Manitou.

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CHAPTER XXI.

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE.

EUGENE dropped the manuscript on the grass as he pronounced the last words, and though his own eyes were suspiciously moist, he pretended to laugh at Adele sobbing in her mother's arms. Lura had folded her shawl closely about her, and sat very still, covering her face with her hands.

"Are you cold, cousin?" said Eugene.

Lura raised her tear-wet face and shivered, then laughed, and said:

"I was cold, but I'm sure it's not ague." Then looking about her she threw off her shawl. "I really thought there was snow on the ground. How very sad it was."

"Very sad," said Mrs. Ashleigh. "And you think, Eugene, that this is all true? that those were really the first Perrines who came from France, do you?"

"I've not the least doubt of it," he answered; "nor that they lived here somewhere as is described. It's really not so long ago, not a hundred years, since

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leaving France. If they had stayed in some civilized part of the country, there would have been many things known of them. But it is like a dropping out of one generation, this living in the woods."

"Don't you believe," asked Adele, and her usually ringing voice had a decidedly nasal twang, "don't you believe if we should try we might find their graves?"

"Oh, no, dear;" Eugene answered. "The vegetation of so many years has hidden them long ago. Then, too, no doubt the banks of the lake have changed. We would have no idea where to look."

"But the beech trees, and the flowers that Celie planted;" persisted Adele.

"True," said Eugene. "But the trees have probably supplied fuel or timber for other settlers long ago, and the flowers, though they might flourish for several seasons without care or cultivation, yet consider how many years this has been for flower generations. No, Gypsy, you must be satisfied with what we have—the romantic story of our ancestors. We can not hope to find the precise spot of their last resting place."

Adele's eyes were very red, and her mouth very sorrowful. She, as well as her mother and sister, had been so absorbed in this little story, read here where the characters in it had lived, suffered, and two of them died, that the long afternoon had passed like a

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dream. For the last half hour, the carriage that had been sent for them had waited in the shade while the driver gossiped with some fisher-farmers who loafed and smoked about the boatman's house. Mrs. Ashleigh, consulting her watch, reminded her party that they must be going homeward. They arose and gathered their belongings, and started for the carriage. Adele still looked about her inquiringly, as if, in spite of all chances to the contrary, she would discover some trace of those graves. Eugene watched her furtively. He put Mrs. Ashleigh and Lura into the carriage, then turning to Adele he took her hands in his and looked down at her sad face.

"Beauty, I can't stand this—I want the sunshine. Let me tell you something."

"Well," said Adele, showing her white teeth in a half smile as she looked in her tall cousin's face.

"A hundred years from now, if any one wishes to find the place where you were laid for your last sleep, it will be readily discovered."

"How?" she asked. "Are you going to build me a tomb, like the true lovers we read of?"

"No; it will not be necessary. I'm very sure that, in the natural course of things, your grave will produce, for a thousand years, at least, sunflowers seventeen feet high."

"Oh, you ridiculous Eugene!" cried Adele, as she

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sprang into the carriage, and her clear laugh rang out again merry as ever.

"Adele," said Lura, "you are enough to waken the dead. Indeed, I should not be surprised to see those dead-and-dust ancestors of ours come up somewhere about here, thus discovering for us their graves."

"Oh, Lura, they've come up long ago in the beautiful trees, or in the turf that grew richer and greener because they were below, and it served year after year to hide them more securely till there was nothing more to hide."

Another delightful drive around the lake, then back to the village. They reached their hotel just as the bell was ringing for tea. "Just in time," said Eugene, as they entered the hall. Lura had reached the foot of the stairs, Mrs. Ashleigh stopped at the parlor door to speak to Mrs. Grant, and Adele came leisurely and last, swinging her hat by the strings. Eugene glanced into the office, then, with a joyful exclamation, he strode to the desk and exchanged rapturous greetings with a gentleman who had but just pushed the register aside. The newcomer was a fine specimen of young manhood. Tall as Lagrange, and of equally fine physique, with golden bronze hair and beard, and laughing, dark eyes, that, in the shadow, one said of them, "Yes, they're black;" but in the strong light the decision was, "No, they're blue." The

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two came with quick steps into the hall, and Eugene called peremptorily to his cousin, who was half way up the stairs:

"Lura, girlie, come down. Here's another surprise for you."

She turned with the exclamation, "Derwent!" but she didn't come down. Derwent Marshall made that unnecessary by going up three steps at a time, taking the "girlie" in his arms and kissing the rosy, wondering face. "Why, how's this?" inquired Mrs. Ashleigh, leaving Mrs. Grant in the midst of a recital, in seven chapters, with innumerable parenthetic remarks, whole pages of foot notes and an appendix, about that summer when her baby died, "pore thing."

"How did you know we were here, Derwent?" Mrs. Ashleigh continued, going up the steps and greeting the gentleman most kindly.

"I had a telegram, two days ago, from this most accommodating kinsman and escort of yours, telling me it would be very much to my interest to join him here, as soon as possible. Not knowing whether he had discovered some long lost rich relative of mine, on the look out for an heir, or Lura had fallen in love with a Hoosier and contemplated an elopement, or what direful thing was threatening, I dropped my palette and brushes, washed the paint from my hands, and—here I am."

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"Eugene!" said Mrs. Ashleigh, "who but you would have thought of such a thing?"

"Nobody, nobody, but just Eugene; the dear, delightful, surprising, good old darling!" exclaimed Adele, as she finished shaking hands and exchanging kisses with her prospective brother-in-law, and turned and hugged Eugene's arm.

"You see," said Eugene, when the laughing was done, "I thought Marshall might as well come now, as to join us two or three weeks later at Montreal; and the discovery Gypsy made that first day we were at the lake, was too good to keep so long; and—but, my dear friends, let us go to tea, and have explanations afterwards. Marshall has my assurance now, that I've discovered no fortune for him, (happy dog, what would he do with it, supposing I had); and he needs no words of mine to establish the loyalty of the lady in the case. I'm famished. I tell you Gypsy, this reading of the loves and lives of a hundred years ago makes heavy work for the cooks, don't it?"

"Eugene," answered the young lady addressed, with much dignity, "I'm shocked, that's what I am; I don't expect to be hungry for a month."

But her expectations, or non-expectations, failed realization in the presence of the bountifully spread table, and she did ample justice to the tempting viands.

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What a pleasant evening it was. The story Eugene had been reading was talked over, and the chapter introducing Constance Haines and her father was re-read. Then Marshall told them that among the paintings which were to be the most precious part of his inheritance was a group of three girls in fur hoods and heavy cloth dresses trimmed with fur. The tallest of the three was the golden-haired Constance Haines, only child of John Haines and his wife Constance Derwent, and Derwent Marshall's own great grandmother. Of the other two figures, one was a bright-faced brunette, and leaning against her a gentle, delicate-looking creature, with the palest of light brown hair and eyes, and but the slightest tinge of pink in her cheeks and lips.

"This picture has the name of Gerald Derwent, and the date 1801. The work was done in Boston," said Derwent. "We have known—that is, this present generation, that there had been some sort of tragedy connected with John Haines, and that he had lived somewhere in the West for several years; but this is the first time I ever heard anything definite about it. Constance Haines married an Englishman, and sometime prior to the war of 1812 went to England with her husband. But growing homesick after a residence there of four or five years, they came back to America, where her large family was educated. She lived

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to be quite old—hasn't been dead more than twenty years—but if she talked of her life in the woods, it was probably to her children, or, maybe, her grandchildren, who have never thought to mention it in this rapid age. Such things don't count with present day Young America. Children read flash novels rather than listen to family traditions. I knew, in a general way, of her early life somewhere in the western wilds, and of her mother's death being in some way connected with it; but I believe my impression was that the mother had been killed and scalped by the Indians somewhere in the neighborhood of the Rocky Mountains. I think the strangest part of it all is that these things happened to our great-grand parents," and Marshall looked at his fair *fiance.*

"Oh, the world is not so very large," said Eugene; "I don't think it strange at all."

"It's large enough and friendly enough to-night to produce an enchanting moonlight," said Derwent, looking out of the window. "Where's your shawl, Lura? let us take a walk."

"What are you so busy about, Gypsy?" Eugene asked, turning to Adele, who had worked on a water-color sketch while the talking and reading had gone on.

"I'm making a land mark for you;" and after a few more touches, and a critical survey of her work, she pushed it toward him. It was a wild, desolate

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spot, amongst tall, overhanging trees and vines. Long grass and rank weeds straggled up till they mingled with the foliage of the trees. In their midst, barely discoverable, was a half sunken grave. A gray lichen covered stone was at the head, and in one spot, where were marks as if some body had scraped away the moss, was seen, half defaced, the name "Adele." But close to the stone, towering above the grass and weeds, with broad drooping leaves, stood a magnificent sunflower. A slender fan of amber light fell down through the trees, illuminating the flower. Eugene glanced over the sketch, then drawing the girl toward him with a quick, strong movement, he kissed her dark hair, murmuring, "My precious darling!"

Mrs. Ashleigh, with a not entirely pleased expression on her face, left her chair, came to the table, and picked up the picture. She readily recognized it as a sequel to the remark made at the lake. Turning to her daughter, she said:

"Adele, dear, will you take this pitcher and bring some fresh water? I'm very thirsty. You'll find Mrs. Vincent in the parlor, I think, and she'll send some one to get it for you."

"Allow me to bring it, Aunt Ashleigh," said Eugene, rising.

"No, let Adele go;" and she put the pitcher into her daughter's hand, and gently pushed her from the

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room, giving her kinsman a look at the same time that he understood.

Eugene sat down at the table, took up the sketch, and with a crayon pencil commenced making below the picture, old fashioned crooked letters; but as soon as the door closed on Adele, he looked up half-laughing, half deprecating: "Well, Aunt Ashleigh?"

"Eugene," said the lady, seriously, "I don't believe you mean to be cruel; you are only thoughtless. You lose sight of the fact that Adele is only a child."

"Certainly, Aunt Ashleigh, she's only a child; but so bewitching a child that a man ought to be pardoned for forgetting everything but her beauty and winsome ways. And I'm at least thoughtful enough to realize that this bewildering child, within two or three years will be the loveliest woman that ever the sun shone on."

"A lovely woman, with a broken heart, may be; and this—" laying her hand on the sketch.

"Aunt Ashleigh, what can you think of me?"

"Your tired fancy is touched by her brightness, and her childish caresses."

"My fancy is most deeply touched; but it is probably not such an overworked article as you may suppose. However that may be, I'm in earnest—"

The door opened, and Adele came in with her pitcher.

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"Derwent and Lura are coming, and here's a nice fresh drink, mamma. I was afraid the boy would empty the well in his determination to have the very bottom pailfull. And what is Monsieur my cousin doing?"

She leaned against Eugene, and one arm slipped around his neck. She read below her sketch, the letters all mixed up with a swarm of butterflies.

"Oh! the heart that once truly loves never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns to her god when he sets
The same look that she turned when he rose."

"Now, Eugene," she said, "that's beautiful. How is it you always do just the right thing?"

"Because my little girl is bound to be pleased with all I do, I think. Another right thing I'm going to do, is to save this sketch for my wife."

"Eugene, don't get married, please," and the arm tightened about his neck, and the dark eyes came closer to his own.

"Never without your consent, Gypsy," and he pressed the little brown fingers to his lips, glancing at Mrs. Ashleigh as he did so.

Next morning one last visit was made to Lake Manitou. The noon train northward bore the happy little party away. As they moved slowly away from the pleasant town, through the intervening screen of

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June leaves, they caught glimpses of silver and azure, lake and sky, and Adele hummed to a plaintive little air of her own:

How shall we know? our wandering feet
My find no more this dear retreat;
* * * * * * * *
Oh! birds and vines, and fair, sweet flowers,
Still keep in mind these happy hours,
Dear friends, forget us not.

THE END.

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